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RANDOM RAMBLES.

BY

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"MORE BED-TIME STORIES," "NEW BED-TIME
STORIES," "POEMS."



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L C.

In the following pages I have not attempted anything so formidable or so dignified as a book of travels. I have merely made a few pen-and-ink sketches of certain random rambles during the last five years.

I would have you glance with me at the picturesque aspects of Parliament Day, of a Roman Carnival, of English social life, of Italian living and French shopping,—and then turn to weightier volumes for fuller statements and wiser dissertations.

L. C. M.

APRIL, 1881.

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RANDOM RAMBLES.

I.

ACROSS THE ATLANTIC TO LONDON.

THE January sea was wind-swept, and possessed by a sort of fury. It was something awful to look astern and see the great, black, mountain-high waves pursuing us, leaping behind us, seizing us, one after another. It was a grand sight, no doubt, but awesome.

How the ship groaned all night long ! How the sea broke with a long, hungry roar against the port-holes ! We used to be wedged into our narrow little berths with pillows ; and then it was more than we could do to sleep, in the midst of all the commotion.

What shall I say of our state-room toilets ? We would get on our feet only to be thrown violently against the berth, and then perhaps hurled back again to the other side of the state-room. We brushed our hair by snatches, and buttoned our

boots in the midst of ground and lofty tumbling worthy of an acrobat.

We should have been shocked at ourselves, no doubt, had we looked in the glass ; but we never could stand steadily on our feet long enough for that, so we were spared I know not what agonies of mortification.

We had been told beforehand that we might hope for a good passage, the sea had been so smooth during the preceding month. But we were destined to test the uttermost unkindness of winds and waves ; for surely, short of a storm which would have made shipwreck of us altogether, their violence could scarcely have gone further. I think we all felt like one poor little Frenchman, who gasped out of his white lips, “I would kees ze land — if only I could zee any land to kees.”

Fortunately, the winds which tormented us drove us always in the right direction ; and our voyage, if rough, was short. In the evening we landed at Liverpool ; and the next morning, at eleven o’clock, we started for London.

They weigh your baggage — these English — with a cruel exactness. They allow you a fixed amount free, but that is a mere beginning. You had never guessed how much trunks could weigh before. You pay a penny a pound for the extra weight, which sounds but little ; yet your effects cost you

seven or eight dollars for transportation, and you left all your comfortable old boots, and the books and the pictures you longed to take, behind you in America. You begin to wonder whether it were not cheaper to travel with only a toothbrush, and buy afresh everything else you need at every stopping-place. The cars contain neither stove nor steam-pipe, and are warmed only by cans of hot water at your feet. Fortified by these, and with railway rugs across our knees, we did not freeze ; though England is cold enough in February. Think of rushing on at the rate of sixty or seventy miles an hour through an open country which you have never seen before ! You catch bewildering glimpses of all sorts of things as you are swept by them, — scarlet-coated hunting parties, flapping wind-mills, cathedrals, — everything you don't see at home.

But the real queerness began when we reached London, at four o'clock in the afternoon.

“ ‘Ave a four-wheeler, ma’am ? Take hall your boxes ! ”

A “four-wheeler” is Londonese for a hack, and common, dirty, disreputable-looking hacks they are. Your “boxes,” — no one says trunks in England; unless he is talking of elephants, — your boxes are put up on the top of the four-wheeler in which you seat yourself, and kept in place by a railing which surrounds the ungainly vehicle.

Thus, with all our worldly goods above our devoted heads, we were driven to the Charing Cross Hotel. It is one of the largest hotels in London, but it has no smart clerk, like the little great man of the American hotel ; the office duties are discharged by young women, civil, kind, attentive, and thoroughly competent.

A room is assigned us, and we go up on the "lift," — no one says "elevator" in London. There is no bell by which to summon this convenience ; and if at any time, being a flight or two above the entrance-floor, you want to be carried a few stories farther up, you are expected to lean over the stairs and shout, "Send up the lift, please," and after a while it comes creaking along.

In your chamber you find chairs and wooden benches, but no rocking-chair, no furnace register, worst of all, no gas. A bedroom candle scarcely makes darkness visible ; for in February London is very dark at five o'clock in the afternoon.

"Will you 'ave dressing-lights ?" asks the neat, fresh-faced chambermaid. This sounds imposing. We reply in the affirmative, and expect a grand illumination. "Kerosene lamps, at least," my friend says ; but that sounds hardly grand enough for the air with which the dressing-lights have been profffered us.

Presently the maid re-enters, and bears, with a

gravity befitting the occasion, a candle in each hand,—tall, new candles these, and set in sticks that look like silver. Dorothy—we call all our English maids Dorothy—sets down the dressing-lights with a stately air, and departs, and we see but little better than before.

But, notwithstanding the dim lights, and the missing rocking-chairs, and the open fires, which burn your nose and freeze your back, we presently find ourselves in love with London.

We wish mildly that they would have more street-crossings, for the streets are fearfully muddy in winter; we would be glad if it were n't so foggy; we regret that they should cover their hackney carriages with advertisements of silver polish and soap; but these are trifles, and London is—London.

What a charm the very street-signs have for us, familiar as they have been to us all our lives in our reading.

We pass our days in hansom cabs. We have always read of hansom, but our fancy never painted so quaint a vehicle. The driver sits up aloft in the rear, and drives over your head. A sort of wooden boot folds over your lap, and a high dasher protects you from the heels and tail of the cab-horse, who is your very near neighbor. On this dasher advertisements are usually paraded in great white letters. We feel

like the men who stand at the street-corners of Broadway with advertisements painted on their unfortunate backs. One day we inform the world of the virtues of Day & Martin's blacking ; another time we celebrate the wonders wrought by Johnson's troches ; yet again we kindly advise people where to get their false teeth. But never mind, we are seeing London, and there is no way in which to do it so well as from a hansom.

One night we were invited to go to see "Our Boys" at the Vaudeville, one of the prettiest little theatres in London. Our escort was an English baronet, and we determined that America, in our persons, should do honor to the occasion. Of course we put on our best bonnets, — those dainty hats which had sprung, fully adorned, from the fertile brain of a French milliner, and were the pride of our hearts. We had on our good gowns also, and our fresh gloves ; but it was on the hats that we chiefly prided ourselves. We noticed that our escort was in full evening dress, swallow-tail coat and all ; but still no misgiving seized us. It was not until we reached the theatre, and were invited by a bland usher to step into the cloak-room, that any doubt suggested itself as to the faultlessness of our costumes.

"We have nothing we care to lay aside," we answered.

"Your 'ats, ladies!" persisted the smiling official.

Our hats! Our *best* hats! Leave *them* in the crush of a cloak-room! Not if we knew it.

"Oh, no, thank you," we said, with an extra smile. "We prefer to keep our hats on, if you please."

"But it is against the rule. I am sorry to say no 'ats are allowed in the stalls."

And our escort whispered: "I'm afraid he is right."

So into the cloak-room we went, and surrendered our cherished hats, and felt like Samson after his hair had been cut off. Our strength was gone. But we recovered our spirits by the time we were well seated and had looked around us. The stalls and the private boxes are the "swell" seats of an English theatre. We found ourselves in the midst of the *haute noblesse*. Some of these gentle creatures we had seen driving in state that very day, in all the pomp of gorgeous equipage and attendant footmen. Here they were at the theatre in evening toilet, at home, as it were. Some wore tarratán dresses, though the month was February. Some gowns were low and some were square-necked, and all were trimmed profusely.

Heads were decked with flowers and feathers, and even with strings of beads. In short, the costume which seemed *de rigueur* for the stalls and boxes was the same with that which would be worn at an

evening party. One sees so many eccentricities in English dressing that one is half tempted to wish that the ladies had a regulation costume, as the shop-girls have. All the shop-girls in London wear black. At Swan & Edgar's, and other fashionable Regent Street shops, they wear sumptuous silks, fitted to perfection ; in Oxford Street their silks are somewhat less costly ; and at Whiteley's — the great cheap store of London — they come down to black cashmere ; but even there their gowns are well-fitted and carefully put on.

Nothing can equal the servility of the London shop-keepers, as a rule. It is a comfort, to be sure, not to be bullied into buying what you don't want, but the freshly-imported American is mildly surprised, at first, to be thanked with just as sweet a humility for saying that goods are trash, and he will have none of them, as if he had launched out in some unparalleled extravagance. He gets used to this servile civility after a while, and receives it as his just due.

“Quite so !” is a favorite formula with the London shop-keeper ; and this habit leads him sometimes into ludicrous blunders. For instance, I went one day into the shop of a London druggist, or chemist, as they say there.

“I want a tooth-brush,” I said.

“Quite so, madame !”

“And some smelling-salts — strong.”

“Quite so !”

“Oh, and ink ; have you good black ink ?”

“Quite so !”

Presently my parcels were put up and I began to count out the pay for them. My Yankee arithmetic was scarcely equal to the shillings and six-pences, not to say farthings, of this unaccustomed currency ; and I said, —

“I am awkward with your money.”

“Quite so, madame,” came the shopman’s reply, with the accustomed sweet readiness : and it was only by the smile I could not repress that he was reminded of his unintentional courtesy. There is something pitiful in this abject humility of the lower orders in England. They are a sad-faced and solemn set. They never expect to rise. They quite understand Carlyle’s theory that half mankind are born with saddles on their backs ready to be ridden, and the other half are born booted and spurred ready to ride them. The common people have felt the saddle on their backs so long that they do not object to it now ; I presume, in fact, they scarcely feel its pressure.

The whole of life in England seems to me to be arranged for the benefit of the upper classes, one of whose distinguishing characteristics is a very wholesome, or rather a very unwholesome, contempt for those people who are beneath them.

We meant to stay one day in London, and we stayed six. But the sixth day was the opening of Parliament, and we were fortunate enough to secure cards of admission, through the kindness of an officer in the Life Guards with whom we had crossed the Atlantic.

On the ticket was printed: “No one admitted except in *full* dress.”

Now “full” dress means not more clothes than usual, but less. It means a low-necked gown; and that does n’t sound comfortable in February. But Roman Pompey—strong old hero—said once, when he was told by an oracle that if he went to a certain place where duty called him, he would surely die, “It is necessary to go: it is not necessary to live.”

For us, it was necessary to see the Queen: it was not necessary to be comfortable. So we got ourselves into our evening dresses, and then into a four-wheeler. We thought of a brougham and a man-servant; but we concluded to save our shillings and trust to luck. So we fell into the line of gorgeous carriages, in our old four-wheeler, with a certain satisfaction in the thought of our safe obscurity.

It was a day of snow and sleet and bleak winds, and we hugged our shawls around our shivering shoulders as we drove along slowly between the throngs of eager sight-seers who filled the sidewalks.

Parliament Street was brave with flags, and flamed

with red bunting at every window. Everywhere were soldiers, — life-guards, hussars, and so forth, — keeping the patient, waiting populace within their due limits. I wondered whether it was the sentiment of loyalty, or merely the love of a fine show, which held the tired throng standing there, hour after hour, so patiently.

In the House of Lords the scene was not brilliant at first, because it was so dimly lighted. The gas was turned low, and the dull February day scarcely penetrated through the gorgeous painted windows. The house was nearly filled at half-past one, an hour before the Queen was expected. About two the full force of the gas was turned on, and then the house seemed all ablaze with splendor.

There were the ambassadors from foreign countries, glittering with decorations. The bishops were there, too, stately in their robes ; and the judges, funny enough in their wigs, which looked like sheepskins with the wool well curled ; the peers in their scarlet and ermine ; the pretty young peeresses, with their graceful Paris gowns, and their eyes as bright as the diamonds that they wore ; the old peeresses, for whom grace and beauty were only traditions of a long-forgotten past, whose jewels mocked their faded faces, and whose feathers nodded over heads no longer fair, — it was altogether a glittering spectacle.

The house was cold, and the noble ladies drew their shawls and opera-cloaks tightly round them. But presently came a general whisper that the Queen was coming; and instantly all the wraps were dropped, and fair necks, sallow necks, fat necks, scrawny necks, all alike, were bared in honor of Her Majesty.

A cannon was discharged, and then the pursuivants were seen filing through the doorway, at the left of the throne. Then came the heralds, the "Gentlemen of the Household," the great officers of State, and then the Queen herself, accompanied by the Princess of Wales, the Princess Louise, and the Princess Beatrice, and attended by the Mistress of the Robes and the Lady in Waiting. Then came Officers of the Household, Lord this and Lord that, Gold Stick and Silver Stick, officers, pages, and sergeants-at-arms, with whom the procession closes.

The Queen takes her seat. She is a stout, plain-featured woman, who never could have been handsome, even in her youthful prime. Now her honest, round, elderly face was flushed, with excitement or with the exercise of walking, to an unbecoming dark red.

She wore a dress which called itself low-necked, but was quite modestly high compared to those which many other ladies had donned in honor of her royal presence. It was of black velvet, and she

was sumptuous with lace and miniver, and magnificent with diamonds, among which was the famous Koh-i-noor, sparkling like a little sun among lesser stars. I should never have guessed that she was a Queen but for her good clothes, and the fuss they were all making about her.

On one side the throne, where Her Majesty sat serenely fronting the assembled and admiring throng, was the Princess Beatrice, and on the other, the Princess Louise,—nice, wholesome-looking gentlewomen, with nothing remarkable about them. They adjusted the royal robes, which hung on the throne behind their mother, the noble lords and ladies who had accompanied the Queen placed themselves in proper position before her ; and then came the funniest little bit of play-acting.

The House of Commons, you must know, is very tenacious of its dignity as the representative of the people,—the Queen's rival sovereign,—and though, of course, their presence is expected at the opening of Parliament, by no means will they come unsummoned, or appear to take any interest in the proceedings. They are assembled in their own House, attending to their own business, and they "play," as the children say, that they do not know that anything unusual is going on.

When everything is arranged, the Queen looks about her, and then *she* "plays" that she is very

much surprised not to see her Gentlemen of the House of Commons. She then despatches the yeoman usher to summon the Commons to her presence.

Presently, tramp, tramp, skurry, skurry, in they come. There must have been a good many of them, by the noise they made; but as they took their stand directly under the foreign gallery where I sat, I could not see them, and lost the opportunity to compare the representatives of the people with the peers,—the men of struggle and aspiration with the men placed by birth beyond the need of struggle.

Then, all being ready, there was a moment of intense expectation. That the Queen's speech had been written for her, we all knew; but that she would read it herself, we all expected.

So far, she had not opened her lips, and we wanted to hear her voice, to divine thereby, if we might, what quality of gracious queenliness she had. But queens, it seems, are not bound to keep faith with the expectations of their subjects.

Now came another piece of dumb show. The speech was handed to her, and she held it for an instant. Then she beckoned to the Lord Chancellor, and he received it from her hands, and announced that he was commanded by the Queen to read it.

The command had been given in pantomime; not once, from first to last, did the royal lady open

her mouth. The Lord Chancellor read well,—slowly, distinctly, and with good emphasis.

When the speech was over, Her Majesty rose and bowed to the Princess of Wales, the Duchess of Edinburgh, and the Princess Mary, who had been seated exactly fronting her.

Perhaps this gracious bow was meant to glance sideways and take in the rest of the House; but it did not look so, and therefore I did not appropriate any of it to myself. Then she went out solemnly, this royal lady, escorted as before, and betook herself to her carriage.

After Her Majesty had departed, the shivering peeresses and the rest of us shivering women were permitted to pull our shawls and opera-cloaks about our frozen shoulders; and presently we began to make our slow way down stairs.

Then the carriages were called, and drew up, one by one, before the entrance. "Lord So-and-so's carriage stops the way," was bawled by one gorgeous flunkey after another; and "Lord So-and-so" passed through the throng and got in. His coachman started off at a rattling pace, even while his two or three footmen were in the very act of scrambling up behind. I expected them to break their unfortunate necks, but they did n't.

What gorgeous creatures they were, to be sure! The lords themselves showed small, in comparison

with these big fellows, with blue coats and yellow coats and green coats, all covered with gold lace and silver lace and embroidery and buttons, till decoration could no further go. I had plenty of time to watch them in the hour and a half before my turn came.

I watched the noble lords and ladies, also, whose carriages were called.

Some of the women were extremely pretty, but those were the younger ones. Usually the English fair are fair no longer “once they have come to forty year.” Hawthorne’s descriptions of them do them no more than justice.

Somebody says that the best part of a journey is the getting home from it; and so to me the best part of Parliament day was the quiet hour of rest and warmth and dinner at the Charing Cross afterwards, where I sat and bethought me of the moral of all this, and contrasted the republican simplicity in which I had been brought up with all the pomp and pageantry I had just witnessed.

“‘Call us early,’ Dorothy dear,” were our last words to the chambermaid,—one quotes Tennyson naturally in England. “We are off for Paris in the morning.”

II.

PARIS AND GENOA.

DOROTHY did "call us early." The English Dorothy is faithful. We breakfasted on cold meat and great expectations ; then we took the cars for Dover, and at about half-past ten o'clock the channel steamer for Calais.

We had dreaded beyond anything this passage of the channel; and the sight that greeted us as we went into the cabin was not reassuring. Every woman lay down as speedily as possible ; and there was a double row of opportunities for lying down,—a sort of prolonged sofa all round the apartment, above which was a row of berths.

In the centre of the place were stacked wash-basins, great pyramids of them. Evidently they expected everybody to be ill, as England, in Nelson's time, expected every man to do his duty. However, we were fortunate enough to escape the expected affliction, though I must confess our fortunate fate was exceptional, even on that still day.

At twelve o'clock we touched French soil. Our baggage had been registered for Paris, so it was not opened at Calais, and we took the train at once.

It was dark some time before we reached our destination. A guard showed us to a hall where we were to await our luggage.

Presently it was brought in, and placed upon a sort of extended table, like a dry-goods counter. We produced our "billetts of registration," and laid claim to our own.

Then came the customs officers, full of gentle courtesy. They accepted the assurances we made in bad French that our boxes contained gowns and gew-gaws, and not spirits and tobacco. They opened only one trunk of our three, glanced at a pair of stockings, and respectfully lifted a pocket handkerchief; then they shut up the boxes, and marked them as "passed." "What hotel?" asked the waiting porters. "Hotel Chatham"; and in two minutes we and our trunks were on our way. We had a letter from a friend to the proprietor of Hotel Chatham. When we arrived there, he came out in person to meet and welcome us.

That is one of the pleasant customs of a French hotel; the landlord always welcomes the coming and speeds the parting guest. Save the small matter of the bill,—which is presented in the most delicate manner possible,—it is as if you were the honored visitors of a friendly host.

We brought forth our letter, and Monsieur the landlord had us shown at once to a most charming room up only one flight of stairs.

We knew beforehand that the prices of French apartments were inversely proportioned to the number of stairs you climbed to reach them. We were on the most expensive floor of all, thanks to our letter of introduction. We surveyed the position with that calm philosophy for which the Great American Traveller should be distinguished. Should we humiliate the friend who had given us our letter by demanding to be shown to the fifth story? Never! We would wear our expensive honors meekly, and as if to the manner born.

We looked round on the superb furniture, the many mirrors, the simple elegance of this first-floor room, and we said to each other,—

“It will be very dear, no doubt, but it is very elegant, and we shall stay only two nights and a day. ‘*Soyez tranquille, mon enfant.*’”

So we were tranquil. The hour for the *table d'hôte* was passed; but the considerate waiter proposed to us “a dinner in parts,” as he called it, that is to say, a dinner elaborately served in courses,—so many of them that I cannot begin to recall them.

The cooking was something exquisite. From soup to ices it was a dainty feast. It figured in our bill

at eight francs apiece,—not quite a dollar and seventy-five cents,—but what would you? You cannot expect to dine for nothing, even in Paris; and your dinner at Parker's would have cost as much.

Paris is the most charming of cities,—bright, bewitching, beguiling to the last degree. It was well for our purses that our stay was brief. We drove about during one sunny, happy day, shopped at the *Bon Marché*, bought lovely French paper and bewildering French boots, and then—a hat.

This last I should mention respectfully, for it cost me dear. I strayed, by chance, into the most expensive milliner's in Paris. When I saw what were her prices I did not intend to buy. It was a simple contest of will and wit between myself and the smoothest-tongued young woman I ever saw. Of course she triumphed. I went off poorer by many francs, but richer in self-knowledge and humility, to say nothing of a Virot hat.

Next morning we packed our boxes, and sent for our bill. Nine dollars apiece for two nights and a day! Well, even that was not worse than New York; and I confess to a preference for Hotel Chatham over the Fifth Avenue.

The proprietor appeared again in person to speed our departure. He hoped we had been comfortable; he fain would welcome us again; he desired his regards to the gentleman by whom we had been in-

troduced. He was so entirely friendly that we half expected an invitation to make him a social visit out of pure good-will. If it comes, this invitation, we shall certainly accept it.

We reached Marseilles in the late afternoon, and embarked the next morning on the French steamer for Naples. After two days' sail over the blue Mediterranean, we reached Genoa, and found that the steamer was to lie there for twenty-four hours, for the sake of receiving and discharging merchandise. We went on shore, therefore, and explored Genoa the Superb, as the Italians call it.

It is a city of palaces. We took a *valet de place*, for the day, and he undertook to show us Genoa. He was a short, fat, good-natured man, who had learned patience by long exercise of it in his profession of a guide about town.

We named him Ferguson, in honor of Mark Twain's "Innocents Abroad," and we bargained to pay him five francs each for the pleasure of his company. He suggested a carriage, as a means of getting over the ground more quickly. We looked at him with distrust. We suspected him of speaking in the interest of his own short legs, and told him, with lofty severity, that we wished to make various stops, and we preferred to walk,—*we* liked walking. Ferguson smiled a sphinx-like and patient smile, and took up his line of march.

There are no sidewalks in Genoa the Superb. You share the right of way with the donkeys. The donkey is everywhere present. Sometimes when the path is a narrow passage, just wide enough for two, between the rows of lofty buildings, the donkey with characteristic obstinacy takes the middle of it, as if he expected you to walk on each side of him.

The buildings are magnificent. You go through whole streets of marble palaces. Before one of them Ferguson stopped. It was the palace of the Brignoli, and contained a famous picture-gallery. We went in, and had our first glimpse of genuine "old masters."

Perhaps the Brignoli family had not been quite rich enough to buy the best specimens. At any rate, though most of the pictures bore very great names indeed, few of them greatly pleased me.

There was an "Andrea del Sarto," full of tenderness and grace, as all his pictures are which I have seen. But the two paintings of them all which interested me most were by Vandyck,—two full-length portraits which hung opposite each other. One was of a young head of the house, dead two centuries ago; the other of his wife.

The coloring of these pictures was as true and bright as if they had been painted only last year. The young lord or prince, or whatever his lordly name was, was on horseback. There he rode—

“ what should he do but ride ? ” — out of the past, on into an earthly immortality. He was a princely figure, haughty, handsome, — a man who had loved his pleasure and taken it, and who looked so full of life it was hard to imagine that two centuries of dust had gathered upon his sunny hair since Vandyck painted him.

The young lady opposite was the stateliest beauty you can imagine. Her perfect little head was set upon her haughty neck with an air of royal grace ; her dark eyes and proud mouth betokened a stormy nature. Her robe of “ wine-dark velvet ” swept the floor, and its hem was stiff with golden embroidery. It gave you a curious thrill to think how alive they *had* been who were so dead now.

There were portraits of the family on every wall : the Brignoli had evidently thought themselves worthy subjects for the greatest artists.

Ferguson waited with placid composure while we walked at our leisure from room to room, and took up his line of march again with equal placidity when we rejoined him at the door.

Up hill and down we followed him ; for Genoa is all hills. I privately suspected him of leading us by the longest and hardest ways, in order to punish our cruel rejection of the carriage. Sometimes we paused at palaces, sometimes at churches. One of them, the Annunziata, was like a gem for richness

and beauty. It is the most sumptuously decorated church in Genoa ; and I question if ornament can go much further anywhere. It is one glitter of gold, from floor to dome.

Speaking of gold reminds me of filigree. Filigree work is the specialty of Genoa. We intimated to Ferguson that we wanted to see some of it. We have learned since that there is one whole street devoted to the sale of it ; but Ferguson did not take us there, — not he. He would bring us to the manufacturer, he said. He spoke as if of manufacturers there were one only, and he was his prophet.

Up stairs we went, till we had lost our very wits through fatigue, before we came into the presence of the manufacturer, who was, I have a strong internal conviction, the brother or son-in-law of our guide.

He led us first through room after room devoted to making pretty temptations, in the shape of chains, bracelets, pins, crosses, card-cases, — everything you could think of to charm and beguile. Then we were shown into a little parlor, and seated at a centre-table, where case after case was spread before us.

We made a few purchases : one was of yellow butterflies, so light and delicate that when a certain young companion I know of puts them in her little

ears, I am half afraid they will fly away to join their golden brethren, — vagrant children of the sun and the summer.

At last we got away, and then came the great event of the day. We must see the monument of Christopher Columbus. We told Ferguson this desire of our hearts. We sociably added that we were American, and felt an enthusiasm for Columbus.

Ferguson smiled at us, — such a droll, compassionate smile! — and spoke to us for the first time in broken English :—

“I have know you were Americaines from ze momont you have come off ze sheep. I have in a hotel lived for thirty year. I have zeen mooch of ze Americaines.”

Naughty Ferguson ! He had his revenge at last. Marching solemnly before us all day, he had been listening in appreciative silence to all our familiar confidences, all our gushes of enthusiasm, — aye, even to all our little jokes about himself. Our cheeks burned.

“Vill you have ze carri-age ?” he asked triumphantly. “Ze way is steep to Christopher Colombo.”

No, we would n’t have the carriage, — not if we died for it. He should not listen to us, and laugh at us, and triumph over us afterwards. More loftily

than ever we waved him on. "We would walk ; we *preferred* to walk."

On he trudged, stolidly, silently. I saw a smile creep round the corners of his mouth. In truth, the way to Christopher Columbus was both steep and long. We repented secretly that we had not driven ; but we made no sign.

The monument hardly repaid us. It is a splendid and imposing affair, with a colossal statue of the great Christopher at its summit ; but monuments are so much alike the world over ! The view of Genoa from the hill on which it stands is fine, and that portion of the city of marble palaces is extremely beautiful.

III.

ROMAN LIVING.

WE arrived at the Eternal City, as we had done at Paris, in the evening, and had scarcely any more trouble than in the French capital. To be sure, when they chattered Italian to us, we felt like the man in the play, when he begged the fine lady to "wrestle with the vernacular"; but we pelted them thick and fast with our French, and somehow or other we came to a mutual understanding.

The customs officer was as amiable as in Paris. We got ourselves and our baggage to the Hotel Costanzi, where Bostonians most do congregate; and there we found a good dinner, and a waiter who could speak the blessed English tongue.

Next day we discovered a friend and a boarding-house. Our board, at a *pension* here, costs not more than twelve dollars a week apiece, and we live in a stately house. In its entrance-hall "marble statues stand and look at us," as they did at Mignon, in Goethe's song. Pictures — good copies of old masters — are on the walls, and the whole house is pervaded by an artistic air.

Our room, by rare good fortune, is up only two flights of stairs. It is a front room, and the sunshine pours into it from noon till night, — the broad, warm, caressing Italian sunshine. It is on the Via del Babuino, or Street of the Baboon, one of the most convenient and frequented streets in the town, lined chiefly with shops for the sale of jewelry and mosaics, — shops so full of beautiful objects that they enchant you like the stories in the “Arabian Nights.” Here and there among them is a good hotel, or a well-kept *pension*.

In New York, if you wish to live genteelly, you hire a house ; in Rome you hire an apartment. I think there is seldom such a thing in Rome as a house wholly occupied by one family. “*Quel piano ?*” is as constant a question as “*What street ?*” But *piano* by no means signifies a musical instrument. It means “*What story ?*” — as the French say, “*Quel étage ?*” If you go up one flight of stairs to your apartment, you live on the *primo piano*. If you go up as nearly as possible to the roof, you are on the *ultimo piano* ; nor is the *ultimo piano* an apartment to be despised. It is hard to climb up to it, of course ; but, when once you are there, what widespread and beautiful views you have, and what clear air !

You cannot dance in a Roman house unless the permission is expressly accorded in your lease. So

much rent, with permission to dance, is a common form of words. The lady who has a "permission to dance" is an object of envy to her friends. Whether it is that Roman houses are less strongly built than ours, or that their owners mean them to last forever, I do not know; but I think that ordinary Roman houses are *not* strongly constructed, for I have been told that to have people dancing over your head in them is really something alarming. The old palaces, or palazzos, as they are called, are built so solidly that you can imagine them lasting forever; and if you have the good fortune to live in one of them you can dance as much and as long as you please:

Roman living is very simple. There is one uniform breakfast,—coffee, a boiled egg, and bread and butter. After a few hundred mornings this becomes slightly monotonous, since the only variety to which you are treated is the different degree of hardness to which your egg is boiled. The lunch, or, as they call it, the second breakfast, comes at one o'clock. You have some kind of meat, bread without butter, the simple red wine of the country, and a pear or an apple by way of dessert. At half-past six or seven at night comes dinner, the one substantial meal of the day, and by that time you have become hungry enough to appreciate it. You have soup, fish, three or four kinds of meat, pudding, fruit, and afterward tea.

Roman restaurants are good, but they have certain whims of their own from which nothing would induce them to depart. For instance, they will not give you ices till after one o'clock. Ice-cream of a forenoon? Not by any means. No matter how warm you are, or how tired you are, or how high the thermometer has risen into the nineties, it is not proper, according to the Roman ideas, to eat ices before the second breakfast, and procure them you cannot. Nor need you fancy that you can indulge in any mild little nocturnal dissipations. I went out with a friend at a quarter before ten, intending to solace myself with an ice; but the good confectioner had closed his pretty little shop, and had gone home to the bosom of his family.

Entertaining in Rome is so simple and so inexpensive that I wish the Roman fashion could be transplanted into America. How it would simplify society and multiply hospitality! A lady "receives" from four to six of an afternoon, once a week or once a fortnight. Her rooms are beautiful with flowers, for you can buy more flowers in Rome for one dollar than you can procure for fifteen in New York. Your hostess wears a pretty but quiet toilet; that is to say, some handsome dark silk or velvet, made with high neck and long sleeves. She receives you with a sweet graciousness, troubled by no thought of caterer's bills or blunders. After a

while she offers you a cup of tea and you find in the tea-room plenty of hot tea, and delicious little cakes,—nothing more. An evening party is scarcely more pretentious. Perhaps ices will be added to the tea and cakes, or a glass of simple wine, but nothing else. Game, oysters, cold fowl,—the hundred and one necessities of an American banquet,—are not so much as thought of at a Roman party.

Some of the pleasantest receptions are held in studios. I know one Italian painter whose studio is the finest in Rome ; I fancy there are few, if any, finer in the world. Five or six spacious rooms, hung with wonderful tapestry, adorned with rare carvings, with old china, and with curious Arabian armor, open out of each other. And here are landscapes so beautiful that one could look at them forever. Here a fair Roman matron receives her own and her husband's friends with a charming grace, and a hospitality as warm and generous as the Roman sunshine. These receptions are simple, like all the others. Plenty of tea and dainty little cakes are the sole refreshments ; but there are the pictures to see, and always music. The best singers in Rome sing there, and harp and piano and violin fill up the pauses of conversation. This is a rational and pleasant way of "doing" society. The whole thing is inexpensive, both to host and guests.

You pay eighty centimes — about fifteen cents — each way, for the carriage that takes you there ; or, if you want to keep it waiting for you, thirty-five cents an hour.

A large proportion of Roman society, at least of American society in Rome, is made up of artists. Every other man who is introduced to you invites you to go and see his pictures or his statues. It is no wonder that the artists love to linger among those fascinating scenes. Then it is a very reasonable place to live. Six hundred dollars a year will hire you a really elegant apartment. Five dollars a month will get you a good servant. Or if you do not want to keep house, you can find a comfortable room at a *pension* for eight or nine francs a day, eleven or twelve dollars a week. If you are a man, and choose to hire a furnished lodging-room, and get your meals at the restaurants, you can live much more cheaply still. A brilliant fellow, a graduate of Harvard, was living in this way, and told me it cost him three francs and a half (seventy cents) a day. He paid forty cents a day for his room, and for the remaining thirty cents lived most healthfully and comfortably. I was mentioning this fact to an English gentleman, who had passed some years in Rome, and he said, “ Why, the fellow is extravagant ! He ought not to spend more than one franc a day for his lodgings.” I mention these details

that people who want to see Rome may have some definite idea of the cost of doing so.

A winter in Rome is a delight to dream of. You can choose some new pleasure for every day. Go of a morning to the Vatican or the Capitol, and you can see the finest statuary in the world ; or you can go picture-hunting. In the picture-gallery of the Vatican, or the Barberini, or the Borghese, or any one of a dozen galleries, you can find the wonderful works of those old masters whose art was their religion. Do you want a ramble among green trees, through quiet paths, there are a score of villas hospitably open to the public, each one with grounds so beautiful that you always think the last one, whichever it is, the finest. Or you can haunt, like a happy modern ghost, the old ruins, with their beauty which the world elsewhere can hardly match, — with arches and towers and stately columns rising clear against the wonderful blue sky of Italy. Or, if you choose, you can drop into some dim old church, and see an immortal picture or statue, and perhaps hear some strain of music that will follow you for days afterward with its solemn pathos.

On Easter Sunday we went to the services at St. Peter's. The crowd was dense ; but it was that gentle, courteous Italian crowd, to which rudeness is unknown. It would be difficult to convey to one who has never seen St. Peter's a just idea of the

vastness of this, the largest church in the world. Nearly fifty thousand persons assembled in it, at one time, to listen to the publication of one of the dogmas of the Pope. When you stand at one end of the church, the people at the other look scarcely larger than walking dolls.

The Easter services were not held in the body of the church, but in a side chapel. There was in this chapel a sumptuously adorned altar, a choir gallery, and seats for the priesthood. Ordinary visitors had to stand, but the spectacle was well worth the fatigue of witnessing it.

The priests and the choir entered, at ten o'clock, in a grand procession. They all wore white over-dresses. These were trimmed with lace, more or less valuable according to the position of the wearer. Half the priests wore, outside of these white robes, capes of white fur, and the other half wore capes of gray fur,—articles of apparel which must have been horribly uncomfortable that warm day, but which, at a proper stage of the ceremonies, were removed.

The Vicar of St. Peter's officiated. The way the other priests dressed him up made me think of that quaint little song in “Lilliput Levee,”—

“That is the way they dressed the doll.”

When he had his good clothes on, and was seated in his throne-like chair in front of the high altar, I

longed to make a picture of him. I will tell you how he was attired.

In an inventory of his toilet, I am impelled to begin with his feet. He put them forth in front of him in such a square, regular way, toes well turned out, that you could not help seeing them first. They were encased in dainty white satin boots, with cunning little red tips to the toes.

Then he wore a red petticoat, just the most vivid scarlet imaginable,—a petticoat with quite a long train behind, as I discovered when he stood up afterwards and turned his back. Over this scarlet petticoat was a robe of the most sumptuous white lace, old-fashioned point, I should think; and still over this a shorter, sleeveless robe of white satin, covered with gold lace and gold embroidery.

On his head was a mitre, or high-topped cap, all white and gold. I must by no means omit to mention his white kid gloves, since they seemed to trouble him very much. He spread them out on his lap, and now and then he looked at them, and evidently he was not pleased, for he tried to smooth them out once or twice. I rather pitied him then, for I too have found Roman gloves a delusion and a disappointment.

He had a great deal to do: getting up and sitting down innumerable times, having his mitre changed, and a certain pretty little apron taken off and put

on. When he stood up and turned his back, I saw him kick his train into place with his little white satin boot in a manner suggestive of considerable regard for his personal appearance.

There were no flowers, but the air was heavy with incense ; and every now and then pealed forth the wonderful music, on which it was easy to let your soul float away to heaven, if only you shut your eyes. Certainly I never heard such a voice as that of the Pope's tenor,—sweet, tender, sometimes inexpressibly sad, and yet so strong that it seemed to me there could be no distance to which it might not reach.

One day we went to see the Pope (it was while Pius the Ninth was still the head of the church). A good deal of ceremony had to be gone through in order to pay this visit. We made interest with the head of the American College in Rome. Through him we received our summons to an audience. The invitation contained directions for our costume. We were to wear no hats and no gloves ; to be dressed in black, with veils upon our heads.

At eleven o'clock, the hour appointed, we presented ourselves at the Vatican. We showed our tickets, and were conducted up so many flights of marble stairs that it makes my back ache even to remember them. At last we entered a long, narrow hall, richly frescoed and adorned, where fifty red

chairs were ranged on either side, with a sort of raised dais at one end, on which was a bust of some dead Pope upon a costly pedestal, with a sort of throne-like chair in front of it.

Other visitors came in, until there were nearly fifty of us in all ; and there we sat and shivered. The floor was of marble, beautifully mosaicked, but deadly cold. We sat there from eleven till nearly half-past one before the Pope made his appearance.

At last, when we had nearly perished with cold, and expectation had well-nigh turned to despair, the doors were opened with a flourish. Two or three Swiss guards entered, then a group of purple cardinals, then the Pope, then more cardinals.

How did the Pope look ? Well, he was a benign old man, with a fair, serene, gentle face, rather fat, but not unpleasing. He was dressed like a venerable baby, all in white, except his little red kid shoes. He wore a long robe, which came down to his feet, made of the softest and most beautiful white woollen stuff which you can imagine. It was confined at the waist by a broad sash of white watered silk ribbon.

When he came in, every one knelt,—that is part of the ceremony,—and rose again after he had passed by. Each visitor was introduced to him, in turn, by one of the cardinals, and to each he graciously extended his dimpled, soft, well-kept, white hand.

We were all expected to kiss it. I did this willingly, for he produced on me the impression of a sweet, sincere, benignant old man, of whom it would be possible to be very fond. Many of those present were not content with kissing his hand, but threw themselves on the floor and kissed his feet.

When he had passed up and down the hall, and had spoken to each of his guests a pleasant sentence, the "Holy Father" went out, turning first to bestow on us all his parting blessing. Somehow his words touched me strangely. "Of what use," he said, "is it that I bless those of you who do not believe? But I ask God to bless you, to bless also those who are dear to you, and who are afar, and to show to them and to you the true light." It was a blessing, this, to which every Christian soul could say Amen, however different might be our ideas of the true light.

What a strange thing faith is! During Lent we went to the Church of St. Agostino. We went to see Raphael's picture of the prophet Isaiah; but we saw something of much more curious interest. Time had dealt very unkindly with Raphael's painted prophet, so that not even the brilliant noonday sun could kindle him into glory, or convey to us any adequate idea of the artist's original conception.

But time had not lessened the hold upon the Catholic heart of the Madonna of St. Agostino, one

of the most revered Madonnas in Rome. It is not beautiful, this image of the Madonna holding in her arms the infant Saviour ; but, for some reason, it is regarded with peculiar reverence.

It is often called the Madonna of the Votive Offerings, and I fancy it would be hard to find another so richly jewelled image. She has ear-rings in her ears, and the infant Saviour has ear-rings in his ears. The Madonna's fingers are covered with diamond rings ; she has bracelets ; and the infant Saviour has bracelets and anklets. Then there are glass cases in which is displayed the rest of Our Lady's jewelry. In these cases were cameo pins, necklaces, strings of gold beads, ornaments of every sort, which had been brought for her by the faithful among the rich, and an immense number of silver hearts, the simple votive offerings of the poor.

Near the Madonna was a vase of holy oil, in the centre of which was the small flame of a tiny wick. The people seemed to have faith in the healing virtues of this oil. One after another, sufferers would go up and kiss the foot of the Madonna, and say a prayer ; then dip a finger in the oil and apply it to whatever spot was the seat of their pain, crossing themselves the while.

I saw a poor old man, so old he could scarcely bend his stiffened knees, and so ragged his poor clothes would hardly hold together, first kiss the

Madonna's foot, and then press upon it his sore and almost sightless eyes. Then he anointed them with the oil, and tottered off, hopeful, no doubt, of a cure.

Next came a girl, a Roman beauty. She was daintily attired ; she had great dark eyes, which looked, like those in the picture of Beatrice Cenci, as if they had shed many tears. Her trouble was not physical, for she was full of health and of life ; but not one of the Madonna's worshippers was more in earnest than she. Her kiss upon the foot, which so many sad lips had worn smooth, lasted long, her prayers were not quickly said, and when she rose, there was the look in her face of one who had laid down a heavy burden.

How strange it all appeared to Protestant eyes, — the much bejewelled image, the altar decked with tawdry paper flowers, and the worshippers so heart-broken and so passionately sincere. Yet more strange and more pathetic is the sight of the Holy Staircase, — the staircase consisting, as your Catholic friends will tell you, of twenty-eight marble steps brought from the palace of Pilate at Jerusalem, steps which Catholic tradition says our Saviour descended when He left the house of Pilate. You are permitted to go up them only upon your knees ; and you can seldom go there without seeing a sad procession of penitents climbing them thus, and pressing their lips to every successive step.

They must be in desperate earnest, these worshippers ; but the men who seem to me to have least heart in the religion are the priests. They have a well-fed, careless, indifferent air, most of them ; though here and there you come upon some face which reminds you, in its pallid abstraction, of the saints of old. Well, things change, even here at Rome ; and to-day the children of Mr. Van Meter's mission sing the hymns of Moody and Sankey under the very walls of the Vatican, so close to the ears of the Pope that he cannot help hearing them if he would.

There is another old gentleman in the neighborhood of Rome to whom it is yet more difficult to make a visit than to His Holiness. I refer to General Garibaldi. A few days after paying our respects to the Pope, we thought we would go to the opposite pole of the magnet, and offer our congratulations to the General on his United Italy. We drove several miles out of town to find him, and on the way it began to rain. We drew up before his gate wet and shivering. The gate was locked. Several other carriages were there before us, their occupants wet and shivering also. After awhile an Italian woman came to the gate. The General did not receive to-day, she said ; if we would return to-morrow at four o'clock we should surely see him. It seemed cold comfort, but there

was no help, and we turned our unwilling faces toward Rome.

The next day we returned again at the appointed time, and were admitted. The house is externally very handsome, and the grounds which surround it are beautiful; but inside prevails what I should call absolute squalor, but what may be the great General's idea of simplicity. The room in which he received us was large and well-lighted; but it was absolutely barren of every comfort. Here and there great patches of paper were torn from the walls. A rusty-looking trunk stood in one corner. The sole furniture was a long table and five hard chairs. In one of these chairs sat Garibaldi himself, the other four were occupied by four common-looking men. Who they were I have no idea, or why they were there. They sat there solemnly when I entered; they sat there solemnly when I came away. Any idea of yielding their seats to ladies—several of whom were waiting in the room—never crossed their minds.

Garibaldi is singularly handsome even now in his old age. He stretched out to us his poor hand, all contorted with long rheumatism, and he spoke to us with the brightest and sweetest cordiality. They say he likes Americans, and, indeed, he told us so himself. But we were not invited to sit down, and our standing audience came to a speedy conclusion.

No doubt Garibaldi could live differently if he would, but to me there seemed something pitiful in an old age so absolutely devoid of ordinary comforts.

However, comfort, as we understand it, is not known in Italy. The wealthy people live elegantly; the artists, and other people of refined tastes, live beautifully, so surrounded by works of art, so lavish of flowers and pictures, that life is charming; but there is, everywhere, a conspicuous absence of many things which we, in America, regard as absolutely essential. Among the common people there is nothing of the snug thrift that makes the humblest cottage in America a home. And yet, I think, the Italian peasantry are far happier than the day-laboring classes in America. They ask for so much less that their life is infinitely easier. You never see the harassed, care-worn expression so common with us. They live out of doors, or with open doors; they bask in the sunshine of their sunny land; they are always ready to talk, or laugh, or sing; and to me, looking on, it seems as if there never were people so absolutely free from envy, malice, and all uncharitableness, so genuinely kind of heart, as these Italians of to-day.

IV.

A ROMAN CARNIVAL.

THE Carnival of 1876 began on Saturday, February 19, and continued until the midnight of February 29, Shrove Tuesday. The chief scene of the merry-making is the Corso, the fashionable thoroughfare of Rome, a street a little more than a mile in length, extending from the Piazzo del Popolo to the Piazza di Venezia. For the whole of this distance the houses were hung with bright-colored bunting — red and white, blue and white, pink and white, — anything that the taste of the occupants preferred or their complexion demanded ; for each pretty girl had her balcony draped with her own favorite and most becoming colors. Some of these balconies were beautifully curtained, so that the fair occupants could conceal themselves when they chose. All these preparations were completed by the noon of the 19th ; and then, gradually, the streets began to fill with maskers. By three in the afternoon the Corso was crowded. A crowd in Italy, however, means nothing disagreeable. These Italians are the gentlest people in the world. They do not jostle or

push you ; but they quietly pack themselves close together like sardines in a box.

The first day of the Carnival lacks the pomp and splendor which, later on, make the streets seem like fairy-land. The costumes of the maskers are ludicrous rather than brilliant ; since the first day or two is devoted to the throwing of *confetti*, that is to say, of plaster of Paris, either in the form of shovels full of white dust, or of little images and balls, which look as if they were candy, but break against the victim, and turn him into a dusty miller for whiteness. Good clothes are the signal for a wild attack from every quarter. Woe to the pretty bonnet or the new cloak that ventures upon the street during the first two days of Carnival. Woe, above all, to the solemn stovepipe hat. That is an intruder not to be tolerated for one moment among these merry-makers. Pretty girls in the balconies, fantastic maskers on the street, the very little *gamins* themselves, all unite in one uproarious attack. Monsieur of the stovepipe is assailed by showers of *confetti* from every direction, and presently he is only too glad to retreat, with his hat knocked into a shapeless mass above his unlucky eyes.

I forgot to tell you that in front of every balcony is a sort of trough,—a receptacle for the munitions of war, containing, at first, the *confetti*, later on in the carnival, flowers and bon-bons. The devil is among the

earliest personages to appear on the scene. The devil, did I say? Rather, whole legions of devils, for you cannot look in any direction but you see one, clothed in fiery red, with the traditional horns and hoofs, and a long, frisking tail. A child I knew once said to a boy she had heard called a fool, "They say you are a fool, Thomas; but never mind, you 're a good fool." Similarly, to these devils one was tempted to say, "You 're a devil, aren't you? Well, never mind, you 're a good devil." For this especial mask seemed to be the favorite disguise of the most jolly and good-natured of the revellers. His Satanic Majesty would prance up and down the street, cutting up the most astounding tricks before high Heaven; but always he was amiable, bowing this way and that, bending himself nearly double before every pretty woman, carefully tender of every little child.

Young men and maidens, in dominos of gayly-striped calico, walked numerously up and down; and then would come some pair who seemed to be tottering old people, hobbling along arm in arm, and addressing every one in a queer, little cracked voice that was infinitely funny. All the maskers, indeed, disguise their voices, and you would scarcely believe the rich, round Italian vowels could be made to sound so thin and shrewish and cackling.

With the first of the week the confetti-throwing

was abandoned for flowers and bon-bons, and graceful little tokens of good-will ; and then the real pomp and splendor of the Carnival began. Satan in horns and hoofs still frisked his frequent tail among the revellers ; but he was only the foil which set off the grace and splendor of a thousand dazzling costumes. High and low, rich and poor, all donned masks of one sort or another. As some one said, the very beggars at the church-door seemed to have gone to the expense of a domino.

Early in the week was the grand procession, for the most remarkable appearance in which the municipal government had offered a premium. This reward was taken by a band of men disguised as monkeys. An immense cart was covered with soft green, to represent an open field, and from the centre of this field rose a tall tree,—a real tree, its many boughs stripped bare by winter. On these boughs the monkeys perched, or let themselves down from one to another, swinging and chattering, and looking and acting more ludicrously real than anything you can imagine. They cracked nuts with their teeth, they ate apples, they pelted the people below with anything they could catch up, they worried each other, and behaved, in short, quite as you have seen a happy band of apes in some hospitable menagerie.

I believe the second prize for the procession was

taken by a cavalcade of Moors, that is to say, of Italians in Moorish dress, who had stained their faces the proper color, and who rode their superb horses with all the grace and decorous solemnity of the East. Their appointments were perfect, and their self-possession sublime enough for a grand Turk. They were followed by a Chinese pagoda, a towering, cumbrous affair, its turrets rising high in the air, tenanted by a solemn and picturesque band of pigtailed Celestials. In the centre a mandarin sat in state, surrounded by his court. But better than monkeys, or Moors, or mandarin, I liked the handsome men of Milan. They had come down from the north to keep their carnival at Rome. There were two or three gorgeous carriages full of them, and others rode on prancing horses, caracoling along beside the carriages. For them the balconies rained bouquets, and the beauties smiled their brightest smiles. Besides these distinguished groups there was a constant succession of vehicles, full, sometimes of maskers, sometimes of spectators in brilliant toilets. In and out among them wriggled the foot-passengers. I use my word advisedly, to express the dexterity required to maintain one's pedestrian way among the crowds of equipages.

A little before six the streets were cleared of carriages, and the foot-passengers pressed back to the sidewalk to make way for the race, which was the

concluding feature of every afternoon's entertainment. It is as unlike our American notions of a horse-race as anything can possibly be. Imagine a dozen horses, not ridden by dextrous jockeys, but riderless, decked out with pomp of flowers, with silver bells fastened to their manes, bedizened altogether like a Madonna in a Roman shrine, and then let loose at one end of the Corso, and started with tap of drum, and toot of horn, and discharge of cannon, to run to the other end. Madly they tear along through the gaping crowd, as intent, seemingly, on winning as if pressed by the most skilful of whips. I thought I had never seen creatures run so in my life. It seemed scarcely a second before the mile was traversed, the race was over, and the people had thronged into the Corso again.

The evenings were devoted to music and dancing and illuminations. The latter were inconceivably beautiful. Some quarter of the town would be in a perfect blaze of glory. Thousands of Chinese lanterns, pyramids of gas, Bengal lights, blue, red, and green, continually changing; sudden rockets, bursts of unexpected brilliance from every quarter, and in the midst of it all the fountains (for there are fountains everywhere) sparkling and flashing, the statues gleaming white, the gay, gracious, graceful Italian people dancing with their untiring feet.

I liked this out-of-door festivity, so picturesque

and so poetical, much better than the masked balls in the theatres, which also were a nightly feature. These balls began at midnight and lasted till morning ; for the Italian people seem never to sleep at all during Carnival. I suppose their sleep comes in with their fasting and penitence, during the forty days of Lent. The masked balls are full of intrigue and romance and excitement. I use intrigue in the innocent Italian sense. It does not refer to sin, but to plots and adventures. For instance, the members of the same household will take unwearyed pains to conceal from each other what their own costumes are to be, and to penetrate the disguises of the rest. The women are usually more clever and more lucky than the men ; and that woman is triumphant who can beguile her own husband into a sentimental flirtation with her, and then startle him, as she lifts her mask at the end of it, with “Pietro, my angel,” or “Giovanni, my adored, is it not time to go home ?”

The very last day of the Carnival, the mirth rises to its height, the glory culminates. All the maskers are out in grand force. Hitherto the pretty Princess Margarita—since that time become Queen of Italy—has kept to her balcony, from which, be sure, she has sent forth no missiles less pleasing than flowers and bon-bons, and an occasional white dove. But on the last afternoon she drives up and down

the Corso with the rest. Her carriage and horses are superb, her stalwart footmen are glorious in red and gold; but no one heeds the splendor of her equipage, for the soft radiance of her own pallid beauty draws all eyes. She is exquisitely attired, but you scarcely remember what she *wears*, you are so much more impressed by what she *is*, — a fair and gentle lady, smiling sweetly as she bows in response to the shouts of welcome that greet her approach, the rain of fragrant posies that fills her carriage full. She bows and smiles, bows and smiles, with an unvarying graciousness, to the lofty and the lowly; but is there not — or is it only my fancy? — a lurking sadness in the soft, dark eyes, even while the bright young lips are smiling? Perhaps it is but the natural expression of her poetical temperament, for the princess loves passionately verse and art and music; but one who has seen her husband, Prince Umberto, — a man fierce-looking and somewhat sensual, and altogether of the earth earthy, like his father, King Victor, — must needs wonder whether there can be anything of spiritual kinship between this man and his rare, pale princess.

Behind comes an equipage which the Queen of the Fairies must have lent for the occasion, — the tiniest of pony phaetons, drawn by four little black ponies. On these ponies ride little postilions, gorgeous in red and gold, like the stalwart servitors of

the princess, and two small footmen sit behind in the rumble. In the phaeton itself are the prettiest pair in the Corso. This boy, with his handsome, haughty face, is the little Prince of Naples, the son of Prince Umberto and the Princess Margarita. He has inherited his mother's beauty, and the haughty self-possession which belongs to the bold, brave House of Savoy. He will be every inch a king some day. His costume, of green and gold satin, with frills of costly lace, was magnificent enough for a young emperor. Beside him was the daughter of a noble house, a little marchesina, who was like the vision of a dream. She had the dazzling pale-ness of a blonde Italian. Her eyes were intensely blue, and bright as stars, and her soft, yellow hair floated about her like a cloud of spun gold. Her costume was of white satin, heavy with gold embroidery. The princess herself had scarcely attracted so much attention as this dainty little pair. They were almost buried in flowers, and they kissed their small hands in return, and bowed with a real, child-ish joyousness which was a pretty sight to see.

Then came all the accustomed spectacles,—monkeys, Moors, Chinamen, Milanese, everybody, and all madder and merrier than ever. Sometimes it seemed as if the very skies were raining flowers, the air was so full of them, flying from carriage to balcony, from balcony to carriage in return.

At six o'clock came the final race ; but the interruption was only for a moment. Instantly the streets were full again ; and no one was missing save the fair, pale princess, who had retired to her balcony, and the pretty children, who had gone, let us hope, to their rose-hued dreams.

Shall I ever forget that night in Rome? The still air was soft as summer. Pyramids of gas-lights rose everywhere, especially in front of the balcony of the princess. The Corso absolutely glittered from one end to the other. The mad, merry music played continually ; and the maskers moved up and down, up and down, in a procession which seemed unending, and was as glittering as anything in the "Arabian Nights."

With the dusk began the gay sport of the *moccoli*. *Moccoli* is the plural of *moccolo*, a wax taper, about a foot long, with a supply of which everybody provides himself. The game is to keep your own light burning, and put out your neighbor's. It is really great fun. One moment a balcony will be one blaze of light ; the next, by a succession of lucky hits, every taper will be extinguished, and the marauders will cry in derision, "*Senza moccolo, senza moccolo !*" which means, "Without a light, without a light !" Men, women, children, and even *gamins* of the street, engaged in this sport with equal gusto. There was plenty of getting out of light, but no

getting out of temper. Unexpected foes burst on you from the side, hung over you from above, swarmed up from below, actually climbing your balcony. Passers-by in carriages dashed you into sudden gloom with unexpected bouquets. Of course, you were not behind in mischief yourself. You held your own light aloft, and swung your fan, your handkerchief, whatever came to hand, as a weapon of attack. It was the gayest, brightest, wildest scene imaginable. Meantime the merry, merry music played ; the gas flared and flamed ; rockets sent up sudden illuminations into the air ; Bengal lights blazed out upon the night, and the perpetual procession went and came. It took some strength of mind to go off the glittering Corso to one's home.

I do not know how long the game went on ; but at midnight a sudden cry arose. They were burning the Spirit of the Carnival. It was the final ceremony, the last superstition. Escorted by a grand procession, with the music playing, and the bright lights burning, they bore the bedizened image, which represented the spirit of the ten days of revelry that had just passed, to the fire in the Piazza del Popolo which awaited it. And there they sent up a glittering fire-balloon, which kindled the sky with splendor. The upper part was all pure white flame, encircled at the base with a wreath of bright, party-

colored lights, which rayed off sparks into the quiet night, as this wonder of fiery beauty floated on and up, over the high house-tops, among the stars, — who knows whither ?

The Roman Carnival was over. Next day the solemn services of Lent began in the churches : the people were sprinkled with the ashes of Ash Wednesday ; the penitents began to drone their prayers ; the workmen returned to their tasks ; Rome was itself again.

V.

ROMAN RAMBLES.

IT is impossible to go out of doors in Rome without seeing something grand and beautiful.

Whether you care for art or for nature, for pictures or for sculpture, for ruins or for the glory upon the mountain-tops and the affluent splendor of southern sunsets, you have them all here.

Sometimes we go to the Palace of the Cæsars, and look off upon the heights, where the snow lingers and the warm light rests, making them shine like the Delectable Mountains. Nearer at hand are the almond trees, in flower, or the orange trees, bright at once with their white, sweet blossoms and their golden fruit.

The "Palace" does not keep to the eye the promise its name makes to the ear. One goes, for the first time, with some vague idea of a stately edifice, and finds instead ruins (oh, how lovely !) that have been but recently excavated from the dust of dead centuries.

Here the selfish, powerful, wicked old Roman emperors used to take their pleasure. Here were

their spacious halls, their baths, their princely chambers. Some of the frescos on the roofless walls are almost as bright to-day as when hands, forgotten ages ago, first made them.

It is the strangest, solemnest thing to stand here, among the relics of that dazzling, tumultuous, stormy time, when Rome ruled the world, and the emperors ruled Rome, but never, by any chance, ruled themselves. I have seen the portrait-busts of these high-handed old sinners, in the Vatican and the Capitol. What heads they had,— broad and strong, and full of aggressive force, but almost all of them sensual and brutal.

Now and then you come upon some noble and handsome face, like that of Marcus Aurelius ; but for the most part these busts of the emperors give you the impression of men you would not care to meet late at night upon a lonesome road.

There is no place in the world so rich in statuary as Rome. You seem to have known little about sculpture until you come here. Here are the originals of those photographs of casts and engravings which have been part of your education. Here Apollo stands in the Vatican in his immortal grace ; here Venus waits forever at the Capitol, a white wonder of beauty, on whom successive generations come to gaze ; here the agony of the Dying Gladiator strikes you dumb, or the serpents that coil for-

ever round Laocoön make you shudder with horror ; here, in the Vatican, are fragments of Greek sculpture which move you with their maimed and pathetic loveliness as no modern art has succeeded in moving you.

One day I went to the Spada Palace to see the statue of Pompey, at whose base, wounded and dying, great Cæsar fell. Another visit was to the superb portrait statue of Sophocles,—the one really memorable thing in the Lateran Museum.

And this reminds me to mention the greatest work of modern sculpture I have yet seen. It is by a man named Antecalsky,—at least, that is the way his Polish polysyllables sounded to my Yankee ears. He has made a recumbent statue of Socrates dead, which is worthy to be mentioned with the few great portrait statues of antiquity.

I had seen a bust of Socrates in the Vatican. He was about as ugly a man as one can well imagine. When I saw him I did not wonder that Xantippe scolded at him ; I only wondered that she married him. Antecalsky, in his statue, had preserved the likeness. The same face was there, with all its harsh lines, all its want of symmetry ; but, by what means I know not, the sculptor had breathed into these rude features an expression of infinite dignity, of unutterable pathos. The soul had triumphed over the harsh clay, and informed it with power and

glory. Here was the philosopher, here the martyr. And yet he was so dead ! The head had fallen upon his breast ; one arm lay outside the rough blanket which was drawn up over him. Here was the majesty, the repose, the triumph of death, when death comes to a man who has known how to live.

I believe the picture I liked best among the "old masters" at Rome was the *Madonna di Foligno* of Raphael. Then, too, there are a few wonderful Titians ; and some faces by some of the very old painters before Raphael, so pure that you almost think the artist must have gone to heaven to find his models.

In the Church of the Capuchins is the "St. Michael and the Dragon," of which you will find excellent engravings in the print-shops. Guido Reni was not a good colorist, so he is one of the artists whose pictures can be fairly represented by engraving.

It is down underneath this Church of the Capuchins that you see the famous stone cells "adorned with flowers and frescos of bone," — cells than which the imagination can conceive nothing more ghastly.

It is very curious how, in this Roman Catholic country, the most mysterious and solemnest rites of religion blend with the commonest events of every day. I was in a shop on the Corso, buying a pair

of gloves, one gray, sad afternoon, when suddenly the strangest, most melancholy, most dreary chant broke on my ears, drowning all other sounds. I stepped to the shop-door.

As if by a miracle, the busy street had been cleared of all but one long and singular procession. It was the funeral of Prince Doria which was passing. There was a company of priests, then some brothers of the Misericordia, then the bier, with its superb pall wrought heavily with gold ; then more of the Misericordia, — figures clad wholly in black, and wearing thick black masks, through which nothing appeared but their eyes, glowing with an unnatural brightness ; then came the Capuchins, in brown, with brown masks ; then some masked men in gray ; then a pathetic company of boys, in black, and masked also.

I should think the procession was a mile long ; and I came upon it again, half an hour afterwards, in another street, still intoning the same most lugubrious of chants, — more hopeless and more mournful than anything I could conceive except the cry of a lost spirit.

There is no place, I fancy, where so much artistic beauty exists out of doors as in Rome. You will hardly take a drive without coming upon some new wonder. There are beautiful statues, frescos, fountains everywhere, and it is not strange that, when

artists go to Rome for a little season of study, they linger on and on, until before they know it they have grown old, and never remembered to go away. If they do go they always want to return, and so they drink from the Fountain of Trevi the last thing.

I think the Fountain of Trevi must be the most beautiful of all fountains. Its waters are exquisitely clear and pure, and they are said to possess a peculiar power. If you want to be sure of going back to Rome, you must make, on your last day, a pilgrimage to Trevi. You catch the glittering waves in a glass, and take seven sips without stopping,—just seven, neither more nor less,—then you break the glass from which you have drunk, and throw into the basin of the fountain a sous, and then you go away, with, very like, a drop or two in your eye,—tear or fountain-spray, who knows which?—and be sure that this draught you have taken will so work in your veins that, however Fate may frown, you will be brought back, by the sole force of this occult spell, to Rome.

People usually drink Trevi water the last evening before they leave. They go out with their friends, in a little procession, half sad, half merry. They carry tiny wax tapers, like the moccooli of the Carnival, in their hands, and they wind round among the rocks of the great fountain,—a pretty sight,

which the gentle Romans seem to like to watch. Very queer, I fancy, seem the tricks and manners of the stranger to the observing Roman. He wonders, no doubt, why the little procession ; why the lights ; why come by night when one might come by day ; perhaps he even wonders why want to come back to Rome. But when you come here, gentle readers, and have tried Rome for yourselves, I am sure that you will all drink Trevi.

VI.

FLORENCE DAYS.

To go from Rome to Florence was like going from New York to Boston. The climate of Florence, like that of Boston, is *contrary*. East winds blow there ; they sweep up the Arno, cold, and cruel, and searching. The warm sun laughs at them in vain. They blow on triumphantly through all the spring. I speak of the sun ; but during the three weeks I passed in Florence, the sun and I were well-nigh strangers. It was the first day of May when I went there. When I rode out of Rome, in the morning, the whole world was ablaze with light. The Campagna was one field of scarlet poppies, which glowed and burned in the sun. The sky was intensely blue, and up into the azure the skylarks soared, dropping their wonderful notes like a shower of jewels.

The journey from Rome to Florence is eight hours, by express train, — a most interesting ride, among scenery as varied and beautiful as can be imagined. But as the day wore on, its brightness became obscured. The blue sky turned to gray, and Florence

received me with a wicked little drizzle. They say a bad beginning makes a good ending; but for twenty-one days it rained, and it rained, and it rained. There were only three days during the whole time in which some rain did not fall. But between the showers I saw "Florence the Fair" quite thoroughly. It is a more modern town than Rome, and lacks the tender picturesqueness which ruins and memories impart to the Eternal City. If one prefers commonplace comforts to the delights of retrospect and imagination, then might one prefer Florence to Rome. The streets are much wider—indeed, in all the new parts they are very spacious—and they are much cleaner. All Florence seems to have had its face just washed; and perhaps that is the reason the Arno is so dirty. It looks as if it had been the city's wash-basin for many a century. Yet, in spite of its mud-colored waters, it is the Arno which makes Florence beautiful. The life and charm of the city cluster about it. On its shores are the streets where are all the most fascinating shops.

Florence is built on both sides of its river, and the two portions are connected by six bridges. It is a lovely sight to stand on one of these bridges, at sunset, and see the river, crimson with its reflections of a crimson sky; and yet lovelier it is when the whole scene is bathed in the serener splendor of

a full moon. The most interesting of the bridges is the old Ponte Vecchio, or Jeweller's Bridge, a covered bridge which dates back to the Roman period, and is flanked by stalls which have been occupied by jewellers since the year 1593. It requires a strong will or an absolutely empty pocket to traverse this bridge in safety. On either side you are assailed with the most fascinating temptations. Here are pearls white as milk, and with an indescribable pure lustre, beside which diamonds look almost garish and vulgar, turquoises which have blossomed into forget-me-nots and violets,—and here the fascinating mosaics of Florence, which copy in precious stones every flower under the sun. White lilies, roses of every shade, myrtle, heliotrope, fuschia,—whatever blossom you like best you can find here, on brooch or bracelet or medallion, and so carry home to your sweetheart an everlasting bouquet.

Each Italian city has its special attraction for shoppers. In Rome it is stone cameos, which are nowhere else cut so exquisitely; in Florence mosaics are the specialty; while Venice tempts you with the daintiest glass in the world, and with old point laces of which a queen might be proud.

Life in Florence is much the same thing as in Rome. Here, also, people live in apartments, and give charming little receptions, and drive in com-

fortable little carriages for next to nothing an hour. You begin your Florentine day with your morning roll and coffee. Then you go out, if you are a stranger within the gates, to see pictures ; and return at one o'clock, tired and hungry, for your second breakfast. In the afternoon you make your visits, or you drive into the enchanting suburbs of Florence, — to Fiesole, or Bello Sguardo, or Certosa ; or else you drive from four to six in the Cascine, — the Central Park of Florence. If you want to meet the fashionable world, you will go to the Cascine. You will see there every person of distinction in the town in the course of an afternoon. There are splendid horses, fine carriages, and there are beautiful women beautifully dressed. Ladies hold something like receptions there. They make elaborate toilets for the occasion, and then are driven slowly up and down. Now two carriages draw close together, and stop for the fair occupants to exchange the gossip of the day ; now a cavalier rides up to the side of a landau, and doffs his hat while he talks to some pretty girl or stately matron. They eat ices in front of the cafés, and home they go at sunset, to dine and dress again, and meet at some dance or *conversazione* in the evening.

I spoke of the picture-galleries as the occupation of one's morning. The galleries of Florence are in some respects the richest in the world. The Pitti

and the Uffizi are on opposite sides of the river, but connected by a covered gallery across the Jeweller's Bridge, so that for the same admission fee you can see them both. There is no single room in the world which holds so many priceless pictures as the Tribune of the Uffizi. Here are some of the best paintings of Raphael; here are the painted Venuses of Titian; here the finest Andrea del Sarto I have ever seen; Rubens, Van Dyck, Guercino, and all the rest of the very greatest names are represented. Here, too, are a few of the finest statues in the world. Below the Titian Venuses stands the serene, sculptured Venus de Medici, mocking the painted warmth of the others with the white calmness of her immortal repose. In the Pitti Gallery, too, nearly every painting is a masterpiece. Besides these two superb collections, there are the Fine Arts Academy, the Bargello, and a dozen places of lesser note, while there are scores of churches and convents, each one of which is a treasury of art.

*The pictures which blossomed out of Art's very dawn are to be seen in Florence,—Giottos and Cimabues and Fra Angelicos. Fra Angelico was a pious monk, who never commenced a picture without a prayer. He lived an absolutely holy life; and in presence of the sweet reverence of his saints, the exquisite purity of his Madonnas, you almost feel

that in answer to his prayers the blessed ones of heaven must have sat to him for their portraits.

One of the most interesting monasteries is at Certosa. It is three miles outside of the city's gates, and is a monastery of the Carthusians. When the convents were suppressed by the new Italian government, the monks at Certosa were made an exception. They were forbidden to receive any new-comers, but the dear old men, who had been for years the special Providence of the humble people around them, were allowed to remain.

"There are twenty of us now," said the dark-eyed monk, who conducted us about. "The eldest of us is eighty-five, and the youngest sixty. We shall all be with our dead brothers before long."

There was a look on his face half-sad, half-hopeful. It touched me profoundly to see these white-robed, patient old men, doing all their duties so perfectly ; and to fancy how, year by year, the band would grow smaller, and at last all would be gone over to the majority, save, perhaps, one or two white-robed mourners, who would dwell a brief space among the ghosts and graves, waiting in a solitude — how unutterably dreary ! — for their own turn to come.

It is the monks of Certosa who make the delicious Chartreuse cordial,— the red, green, and yellow Chartreuse, precious as melted pearls. They make also choice soaps and perfumeries, and they

have a garden full of the sweetest and brightest flowers.

There are other monasteries in Florence which are among the most interesting of its haunts. At old San Marco you see the most beautiful of all the pictures painted by that sincerest, simplest, and holiest of the old masters, Fra Angelico. At Santa Maria Novella you find not only pictures and statuary, but a celebrated pharmacy, where you buy of these unworldly monks choice odors for your handkerchiefs, delicate *liqueurs*, and even powder to make your face more fair. How queer it seems for these secluded men to spend their placid, solitary lives in ministering to the world's worldliness !

The two most interesting churches of Florence are the Cathedral — *il Duomo*, as it is always called — and Santa Croce. Externally *il Duomo* is the most beautiful church in Italy. From its dome Michael Angelo modelled the great dome of St. Peter's at Rome ; and when he left Florence to go to Rome for this purpose, he looked back tenderly at his beloved Duomo, and cried out, "A larger dome I may build, perhaps; but one more beautiful I never can."

Out of what trifles great things grow ! The Pitti Palace, the residence of the king whenever he goes to Florence, was the offspring of a boast. Years ago the palace of the Strozzi was the largest in Florence,

and many were the vaunts of the Strozzi family over its grandeur. The Pitti listened in silent wrath, till at last their anger blazed into words, and they said scornfully, "We will build a palace so grand that its court-yard shall be large enough to take in the whole of Palazzo Strozzi." So the great, dark, superb pile which is now the king's palace went up ; and indeed, the whole Strozzi Palace might be set down in its court-yard. I went through it one afternoon, and it was a long walk, I assure you. But it was a fine enough sight to reward one for any amount of fatigue. The great suites of apartments were in such perfect taste, and yet were so various in style and color as to be a perpetual marvel. In each room the hangings of the walls and the upholstery of the chairs and lounges would be of the same material. Sometimes it was satin of the richest and softest quality ; sometimes exquisitely beautiful silk brocade ; sometimes superb velvet.

Everywhere were mirrors, whose gleaming surface multiplied indefinitely all the splendors of the apartments. There were tables of precious mosaics, of lapis-lazuli, of malachite, of priceless old carving. There were cabinets rich in jewels, and in carven ivory more valuable than jewels. And there was no suite of rooms without its *prie-dieu*, the little piece of furniture at which the occupant was to

kneel and say his prayers. There were few pictures on the walls. What need when the Pitti Gallery is an extension of the palace? But there was one which was worth some whole collections. It was a mother and child, by Carlo Dolce, — the finest Carlo Dolce in the world, so the best critics say. It was in a wonderful frame of black and gold, and somehow the picture seemed to melt into the frame, and the frame to blend with the picture, in a way which I cannot describe, but which made the whole thing perfect as a flawless gem.

The Pitti Palace opens into the Boboli Gardens, — gardens which belong to the king, but in which the people may take their pleasure. They are quite free to the general public on Sundays, and admission can be procured gratis on any day by merely going through the form of an application to the *Prefetto*, or Custodian of the Palace. But the pleasantest time to go there is Sunday, — the People's Day. The gardens are so extensive that you could walk many miles in them without once returning on your footsteps. There are trees in every variety. There are delicious winding ways where you can blissfully lose yourself. There are statues without end,— white shapes of beauty gleaming here and there among the foliage. There is a lake, and there are plenty of seats whereon to rest.

Hither come, on a Sunday, the happy Florentines. The fathers bring their toddling, dark-eyed little ones, smart in Sunday clothes ; young men of the people walk there with their sweethearts ; honeymooning husbands wander round the shady paths with their wives ; and lads and lasses feed the ducks and swans upon the tranquil lake. All is peaceful and quiet and decorous. All these people have been to church in the morning, and to-morrow they will go back to their daily tasks ; but of a Sunday afternoon they are as much the owners of the Boboli Gardens and all their pleasures as the king ever can be, and no doubt they are far happier than he ever thought of being.

There are plenty of cheap and simple enjoyments in Florence. Indeed, I am childish enough in my tastes to find an hour or two's entertainment, any time, in looking at the beautiful display in the shop windows. If you get hungry during your peregrinations, you are sure to be near some neat bake-shop, where you can get dainty little meat patties, or the most delicious cakes and ices. You make an excellent lunch, and ask for your bill. It will be twenty cents, perhaps, if you have been very hungry ; but quite as likely not more than fifteen.

In Florence, as in Rome, flowers are to be had for the asking, and a cent or two more. Every drawing-room is fragrant and every dinner-table

beautiful with them. The villas outside the town are set in the midst of a wilderness of blossoms. Lovely as the country about Rome is, it has a bad reputation for malaria. Prudent people are afraid to stay in the out-of-town villas of the Campagna during many months in the year; but the suburbs of Florence are perfectly healthy, and many families pass the entire summer there not at all uncomfortably. One of these villas—at Bello Sguardo—has great interest for Americans, for it was there that Hawthorne wrote most of the “Marble Faun.” The tower of this villa is the veritable tower of Donatello, and the landscape which you view from its summit Hawthorne has described so glowingly that the traveller of the future had best quote him or be silent. “It seemed,” he said, “as if all Italy lay under his eyes in that one picture. The trim vineyards were there, and the fig-trees, and the mulberries, and the smoky-hued tracts of the olive orchards; there, too, were fields of every kind of grain, among which waved the Indian corn. White villas, gray convents, church-spires, villages, towns, each with its battlemented walls and towered gateway, were scattered upon that spacious map; a river gleamed across it; and lakes opened their blue eyes in its face, reflecting heaven, lest mortals should forget that better land when they beheld earth so beautiful.”

Over such a scene as that you look whenever you climb the heights which encompass Florence the Fair. It is no wonder that the Tuscans love their lily, or that Italy, "the woman-country" of the world, wears the Tuscan lily proudly upon her bosom.

VII.

THE PROTESTANT CEMETERY, AND THE
CHURCH OF SANTA CROCE.

IT was a fitful, petulant May afternoon on which I went with a friend, who has long known and loved Florence, to the Protestant cemetery. It was, as usual, threatening rain, but the day had a certain pensive charm of its own, which I would hardly have exchanged for anything more brilliant. Now and then the sun would break forth from the clouds, and gild the heights of Vallambrosa and Fiesole with golden glory, and make the soft mist, of which the air was full, shimmer with rainbow brightness. Then all would be gray again.

Once the Protestant cemetery lay beyond the old Porta Pinti, under the shelter of the ivy-covered and ancient wall of Florence. Now the wall has been taken down, and the old gate removed; but the cemetery, hallowed by so many precious graves, remains where it was of old, and to it goes a forever-renewed procession of loving pilgrims. We had it quite to

ourselves, however, that fitful, threatening May afternoon ; and I was glad that no hum of alien voices should jar upon this stillness, or disturb the gentle ghosts who seemed to be walking beside me. Roses ran riot there — I think never saw so many together in my life. The mournful yet graceful foliage of innumerable cypress trees shadows the graves ; but in sun or shade alike, the roses bud and blossom. Such roses ! Some of them scarcely removed by a shade from black — black velvet, with just a wine-colored light on them ! You see every tint between these heavy, dark blossoms and the snowiest white, — crimson roses, red roses, blush roses, yellow roses, creamy roses, and then roses with their petals of snow, pale as sorrow or death.

Many great authors are buried here, many heroes, many men of might ; and the saddest thought is that most of these dead died far from home. You read on their tombstones that they were born, some in England, some among the Scottish heather, some in France — in the East Indies, in Sweden, and not a few in America. Anything more touching than many of the inscriptions on the tombstones I have never read. Husbands had left their wives there, lovers their sweethearts, mothers their little children. And over all these graves the gay flowers nodded in the wind, and the sun shone as if there were no such thing as death

in the world. And the sleepers slept: for them were no more hoping and despairing, no waking to pain or joy; only the flowers, and the wind, and the watching sky, and the long stillness.

There are not a few among these graves for whose sake nations mourned. Elizabeth Barrett Browning rests here, under a huge marble sarcophagus,—she who so loved birds, and flowers, and little children. One longs to remove the mass of marble which seems to imprison the sweet soul below, and let the roses of Florence cover her grave. The sole inscription on her tomb is:—

E. B. B. OB. 1861.

One monument which interested me greatly was that of the first wife of the well-known pre-Raphaelite artist, Holman Hunt,—a man as pure and noble in his life as he is faithful and earnest in his art. No one but himself could have designed this monument to his wife. It is a marble ark breasting the waters. On one side of it is inscribed:—

FANNY WAUGH HUNT,
Wife of W. Holman Hunt,
Died at Florence,
December 20, 1866,
In the first year of her marriage.

On the other side are three circular panels, the first inscribed:—

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee ; and through the floods, they shall not overflow thee."

The next panel contained simply the words :—

"It is I, be not afraid."

and the third bore the legend :—

"Love is strong as death. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it."

My friend, who had known well this young wife, who died in the first year of her wifehood, told me that these three inscriptions on the panels were the passages of Scripture which Mrs. Hunt had begged her husband to read to her, over and over again, as he watched beside her through that last long, sad night.

Not far away was the tombstone of the English poet, Clough, a poet less widely known than well known. His audience, if few, was fit ; his readers were among the best.

Near by him sleeps that friend of the poets, herself a writer of no small power,—Miss Blagden, the "Lady of Bello Sguardo," as her Italian friends used to call her.

Here, too, is the grave of that grand, lion-hearted old man, poet and philosopher, Walter Savage Landor. It is an unpretentious tombstone, bearing the inscription :—

Sacred
To the Memory of
WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR,
Born 30th day of January, 1775, —
Died on the 17th September, 1864.

—
The last sad Tribute
Of his Wife and Children.

Space would fail me to tell of all the monuments made interesting by association with the illustrious dead ; but there is one grave which no American omits to seek, where sleeps all that was mortal of Theodore Parker. He lies in a pleasant spot, where soft winds blow through the cypress trees which shadow the simple gray slab, whereon is graven :—

THEODORE PARKER,
Born at Lexington, Massachusetts, U. S. A.,
August 24, 1810.
Died at Florence, May 10, 1860.

Over the low grave grow periwinkle and ivy, planted by his two dear friends, Rev. Samuel Johnson and Rev. Samuel Longfellow, a brother of the poet Longfellow, and himself the author of not a few verses of uncommon beauty. Other hands have planted rose-bushes, which were pink with blossoms when I saw them ; and few days pass that some loving American does not bring tribute of fresh flowers to lay upon this grave.

There is one beautiful monument to a boy eight years old. An angel, with wings strong for flying, bears the child in his arms up over the house-tops, across the river, away into the eternal spaces.

Another stone which touched me deeply bore only the word

LILY,

and above it the sculptured heartsease, which, somehow, I fancied that the poor sleeper found only in dying.

If ever there was a spot to make death seem beautiful, and rob the grave of terror, that spot is the Protestant cemetery at Florence. It is so peaceful and so lovely, in the shelter of its cypress trees, fragrant with flowers, gleaming with marble. Tumult and life are not far away ; but these sleepers have done with tumult and life. The world goes on without them.

A very different burying-place is the Church of Santa Croce, which one might well call the Westminster Abbey of Florence. It is an old church, its foundation stone having been laid in 1297. It has been rebuilt and restored, however, till little is left of the original construction. As it is at present, it conveys a wonderful impression of solemn grandeur. The form is that of the old Roman Basilica ; the long nave and two short transepts make the Latin cross. In the piazza in front of it is the

statue of Dante, by the sculptor Pazzi, which was unveiled in 1864, in the presence of the King of Italy and the assembled people of Florence. A monument to Dante is also one of the most conspicuous objects in the interior of the church. Dante himself sleeps at Ravenna ; but that Florence which neglected and exiled him when he was alive is fully awake now to the honor of having been his birthplace. On his stately monument is inscribed, "Honor to the Greatest Poet." Dante was always sad when he was on the earth ; I wonder if these late glories gladden him now he is under it.

Michael Angelo is buried here. There was plenty of suffering in his long life, too ; but his brave, patient soul triumphed over it, and *he* did not wait for his honors till he was beyond the reach of praise or blame. His bust, with the strong, rugged, earnest face we all know so well, crowns the Santa Croce monument.

There is a monument to the fiery poet Alfieri, erected to him by that erratic, sad-fated Countess of Albany, whom he loved, and who loved him, not wisely but long and well. It is a good example of Canova's method of monumental sculpture. A graceful woman, leaning pensively over the tomb, is intended to represent the Genius of Florence. Alfieri was born at Asti, in Piedmont, of a noble family. He wasted his youth in the pursuit of

pleasure and adventure, and did not commence his literary career till after he was twenty-five. But he worked with fiery rapidity, and in the course of fourteen years produced as many as fourteen tragedies. He died at Florence in 1803, at the age of fifty-four.

Patriots have monuments here, and botanists, and painters, and philosophers. Here sleeps, as quietly as his neighbors, that old diplomatist, Macchiavelli, who lived such a restless, intriguing life that his name has become an adjective, and we call a successful strategy Macchiavellian.

The pavement of Santa Croce has many monumental effigies, chiefly of knights in armor. Frequent feet have walked over them till their dear old noses are worn off, and their valiant breasts are smoothed down even with the floor.

In the cloisters of the church are buried the people whose distinctions were in their old families and high-sounding names, rather than in their personal achievements. And I confess their simple and more human epitaphs interested me much more than the high-sounding Latin which commemorated the heroes. There was one very imposing monument to Lorenzo Martelli, a Florentine engineer, on which we are told that he was "a beautiful example of domestic virtue and Christian manners," and died at seventy-two years of age. His

son Joseph "fulfilled, with ever hot tears, the desire of his heart in placing here this monument, to attest the virtues of his parent."

Virginia de Blasis, "an incomparable sister," is buried here; and we are told, in most mellifluous Italian, how well she sang; and marble singing-books, with the music picked out in black lines and dots, adorn her monument. Here the "unhappy Thomas" and the "inconsolable Maria," erect a tombstone to a brother whom they loved "more than their life," and who was so unselfish that he forgot, in his last moments, his own pains to comfort them.

Of another sleeper we are informed that he was "born in a lighthouse." He is represented as an illustrious example of all the virtues; but he does not deserve so much credit for that, since the idea of a light shining in a naughty world must have been familiar to his cradle. There are various monuments erected to wives,—monuments on which the beloved dead are lamented, always with tears. Of some of them we are told how handsome they were; of all of them how good they were. One is reminded of Owen Meredith's satirical lines,—

"Ah, friend, the women without faults
Have beds beneath the willow."

One lady, we are told, was "a Florentine patrician"; and *yet*, she was a good and devoted wife

and mother, a kind hostess and gentle friend. But not one of all the epitaphs there was so funny, and yet so touching, as that for a baby. It must not be curtailed or condensed — I translate it in full:—

Here lies in peace the most beautiful baby that ever was seen. He was the marvel of all beholders, and the envy of all mothers. He only lived eleven months. God took him ; and he was given up with tears and kisses by his unhappy parents, who will never cease to utter words of grief and longing.

Good-by, Juliano — good-by ! We will never forget you. You came into the world to make our marriage happy.

This grand church of Santa Croce is rich in frescos by the very old artists, — Giotto, Gaddi, Ghirlandajo, Perugino, and others. These frescos tell various legends of the early church, and some of them are extremely beautiful. The church is as rich in works of art as it is in the ashes of the illustrious dead. To higher honor than being buried and commemorated at Santa Croce can no dead Florentine attain ; but for me, I would far rather sleep out there in the Protestant cemetery, where the roses run riot, and the cypresses are green, and the birds sing.

VIII.

VENICE.

CAN you fancy a city without a horse in it, or a carriage, where not even a van or a truck disturbs the stillness, where your household possessions are moved on the witching 1st of May in boats, and you drift along in a gondola to your merry-makings or your funeral? Such a city is Venice, where, as Browning wrote, "the sea the street is." I went out of the railroad station into a gondola, and the enchantment began. I felt the spell, at once, of this unique city,—this one only Venice in all the world. Everywhere were gondolas,—gondolas moored at the quay, waiting for passengers; gondolas drawn up in front of palaces, waiting for their freight of dark-eyed Venetian girls; gondolas threading the mazes of the little canals, or sweeping down the Grand Canal, and drawing near each other now and then for a chat between the occupants.

All these gondolas are painted black. This is in accordance with an ancient law of the republic,

passed once upon a time when the decorations of these fascinating water-carriages were becoming too sumptuous for Republican morals. But even now many of the gondolas are very elegant. They are long and slender in shape, with a high beak pointed with steel ; they are often superb in carving. Inside the little house in which you sit are soft cushions, and gilt-framed mirrors in which the piquant, dark-eyed faces of the Italian girls behold themselves in fascinating reflection.

There never was anything so cheap as the gondola service of Venice. It made one long to turn the streets of New York into canals, and the hack-drivers into gondoliers. Only the hack-drivers would have to mend their manners, for your gondolier never bullies you. He smiles and smiles, however much he may be a villain still. For twenty cents you can hire a gondola with one gondolier for an hour ; you pay only ten cents for every additional hour after the first ; and you can have your gondola from morning till midnight for an American dollar. When he gets through, your boatman has an insinuating way of smiling a last fond smile and pointing to his mouth, which means that he would like, in addition to his fee, a *pour boire*. His expectations, however, are very easily satisfied. If you give him one small copper coin equal to an American cent, he says Thank you, with

an air of sad resignation. But if you give him two cents, then indeed does he beam and glow with pleasure, and doff low his shabby hat : for Venice — so rich once when she was Queen of the Adriatic — is very poor now. You see twenty beggars there where you saw one in Florence ; and I have beheld a man, all patches and forlornness, actually standing up and sleeping in the sunshine, as he leaned against a marble palace.

Venice is a city of palaces. Three quarters of them are unoccupied now, save by the stranger within their gates, who hires them for a season. But they are wonderfully beautiful, with their superb architecture and their great variety of coloring. Nothing could be more delightful than a sail down the Grand Canal at sunset, unless it be one by moonlight.

At sunset, after the warmest day, the air is cool. The sky is crimson above you, and the water which laps around your black keel is crimson also. Everybody has come out to enjoy the delicious coolness and shadow. You meet your friends, and exchange greetings with them as you would in the Cascine at Florence or the Central Park in New York. The old palaces catch the sunset glory, and glow in it with a splendor as radiant as their memories. Busy waiters are arranging the out-of-door tables in front of the cafés in the grand piazza of Saint Mark for

their evening custom. You drift on and on, till the sunset glory fades, and a new glory, purer and paler, has arisen, — the glory of the moon.

Everybody raves about moonlight in Venice, and well they may, for there is nothing on earth so enchanting. You forget the far-off world, — that old, hard world, where wagons rattle, and horses stumble and fall, and people are tired, and duns harass you, and time and tide wait for no man. In this enchanted Venice, it seems to you, no one is ever sad, or cross, or weary. You think that here, at least, you could be reconciled to an earthly immortality. The feeling is universal. A rich Englishman, while I was there, leased one of the old palaces for twenty-five years to come, and was busily adorning it with gems of art. He put into it old Venetian glasses, strange mirrors with nymphs and roses painted on them, such as were the glory of Venice long ago. His silver was wrought by the men of Benvenuto Cellini's time. In his hall were marble statues sculptured by long-forgotten hands. His chairs and tables were carved by cunning workmen who had turned to dust in grave-yards. Everything was of the past, except the flowers, which everywhere ran riot. Marble vases, rifled from tombs, were full of glowing crimson roses. Bright-hued blossoms filled the windows, vines trailed over the walls, fragrance as of a thousand gardens flooded the rooms.

“Twenty-five years!” cried a friend, who was looking on at the lavish adornment of the old palace. “Are you sure you will be contented here so long?”

“If not, it is hopeless,” was the answer, “for I’ve tried the rest of the world, and found it wanting. Year after year Venice has drawn me back again with her charm, always new, though so old. If *she* fails to content me, there is nothing left but to go to heaven.”

And there are those who think, having reached Venice, that they have gone very nigh to heaven. At least let us fancy it is that Island of the Blest which the old voyageurs used to seek.

But where was I? Five minutes ago I was sailing down the Grand Canal by moonlight. It is quite *en regle* to row up to the Piazza and stay in your gondola, while they bring you coffee and ices. Some of your friends, sitting there at the tables, in the glow of the many-colored lights, perceive you and come to speak to you; and now another gondola draws up beside your own, and you make a merry party. And then the band begins to play, and what music it discourses! You stop talking and listen. You finish your ice, and then, to the sound of the music, you float away, and it calls after you softly, sweetly, yet penetratingly, as you drift on, down toward the Rialto.

Nothing ever was so easy or so charming as sightseeing in Venice. You do no walking. You are rowed up to the very steps of church or gallery, and have only to go in and feast your eyes on these immortal works of the Venetians. Anything like the glory of color you find in Venetian art you have seen nowhere else. Here are such Titians as you have never dreamed of. Here are the noblest works of Paul Veronese and Tintoretto. Here are Carpaccios, and John of Bellinis, and all the superb, matchless pictures of those grand old Venetians, who worshipped color, and painted themselves by means of it into a deathless renown.

Of all churches that I have seen, the Cathedral of Saint Mark is to me the most beautiful. Externally it is less magnificent than the Duomo of Florence; but its interior has a fascination possessed by no other church. Said an artist friend, "Its walls seem made of beaten gold." Fancy a church which affords everywhere for its works of art a golden background like that of Fra Angelico's paintings, and then imagine these golden walls covered with pictures in mosaic. Some of the mosaics date back as far as the tenth century.

The floor is of marble mosaic, which has been worn by many feet so smooth that it is slippery. This marble pavement is very beautiful, and it is symbolic, also. Lions and peacocks figure in it

largely. The Winged Lion of St. Mark is the strong, full-fed lion of commerce. It draws its fulness of power and strength from the east, which is symbolized by the peacock. Alternating with this plump and prosperous winged lion is the starved, thin lion of agriculture, without wings, and poor as the Italians think that nation is likely to be which depends on agriculture alone. Externally and internally the church is adorned with five hundred columns of marble, the capitals of which present an exhaustless variety of styles. The most remarkable are eight detached columns, in the vestibule, with peacocks and lions. Over the principal portal of St. Mark's are the four most noted horses in Europe. They are of gilded bronze, and are believed to have been made at Rome, in the time of Nero. They once adorned Nero's triumphal arch, and afterward that of Trajan. Constantine took them to Constantinople, whence the Doge Dandolo brought them to Venice in 1204. In 1797 they were boldly carried off by that high-handed sinner, Napoleon I., to Paris, where they afterward occupied the summit of the triumphal arch in the Place de Carrousel. But at length came the day of restoration of stolen goods; and they say it was a goodly sight, in 1815, when, by the authority of the Emperor Francis, France disgorged her ill-gotten gains, the great, gold-bronze horses among them, and they were

trundled back to Venice, and put up again, where I hope they will stand forever, over the entrance to old St. Mark's.

Round the piazza of St. Mark's the gay life of Venice congregates. Opposite to the church rises the solitary square campanile, or bell-tower, which is always open to the public, on the payment of a small gratuity to the custodian. From this tower you have the finest of all views of Venice. The city is spread out below you, with its churches and palaces and canals. You see the *lagunes* and the neighboring islands; the green Adriatic, with the Istrian mountains rising above it, the whole forming a magnificent spectacle. I saw it when all the sunset glory rested on near sea and distant mountains, and I stayed there until the moon rose and turned the waves to silver.

On the right of the church is the famous old clock-tower, with two Vulcans in bronze on its platform, who strike the hours on a bell. The lower part of the clock-tower is something like a triumphal arch; and through the archway you enter into the Merceria, the principal shopping street in Venice, after the piazza itself. On the opposite side of the piazza from the clock-tower are two stately granite columns, brought by Doge Michael from Syria in 1120. One of these columns is surmounted by the Winged Lion of St. Mark, and the other by

St. Theodore on a crocodile. Near St. Mark's, too, is the Palace of the Doges, a sumptuous structure, full of historic associations. It is connected with the *Carceri* by the famous Bridge of Sighs,—the bridge by means of which so many despairing victims went to their doom.

The old prisons that were the scene of so much cruel torture have been disused since the beginning of the seventeenth century ; but it is impossible to visit them without a shudder. I felt something choke me strangely as I remembered the men who had been done to death there. Truly, the world, full as it is of sin and sorrow even now, is better than it used to be.

There are few places more prolific of temptations to the purse than this city of the sea. You could spend a small fortune in photographs ; and no photographs are so beautiful as those of Venice, with her water-ways, her sumptuous architecture, and her picturesque gondolas. You go a few steps from the photographer's, and pause before the window of a shop for the sale of antiquities. If you have any imagination at all you are fascinated at once. You find here quaint rings, as old as the days of the Doges ; lace which generations of by-gone marquises have worn, and which time has turned to the hue of amber ; fans behind which the dear, dead women, with their red-gold hair that Titian painted, blushed

and bloomed and sighed and flirted. Here are shoe-buckles glittering with diamonds : here, in short, are a thousand relics of a beauty-loving and luxurious past ; and you cannot turn away from them until you have bought something by way of talisman, wherewith to conjure back the shades of dead days and faded glories.

You see long lines of shops, full of the Venetian mosaic, which is not pretty at all, and of the Venetian gold-work, which is the daintiest that you can imagine. Here is Salviati's priceless glass. It is Salviati who has rediscovered the secrets of the old glass-makers. He will tell you that there can be no such thing as a lost art while the human brain retains its former power ; and in this matter of glass-making, at least, he has proved his own theories. Such wonderful colors, such wonderful shapes, such exquisite designs, can be found nowhere else. It almost converts one to Spiritualism, this exceptional success of Salviati's, and makes you think that the ghosts of some of the old glass-makers have been whispering their long-forgotten secrets into his ears. You have lingered all the morning round this captivating piazza of St. Mark's, with its shops full of temptations, and now the bronze Vulcans of the clock-tower march out and strike the hour of two, and retire again ; and just as they beat their retreat you see one of the prettiest sights in Venice.

Long ago,—at the beginning of the thirteenth century, so the story runs,—Admiral Dandolo, while besieging Candia, received intelligence by means of carrier-pigeons, which greatly aided him. He then sent the birds to Venice with the news of his success; and since that period their descendants have been carefully cherished and greatly prized by the Venetians. Every day, at two o'clock, the doves are fed at the expense of the city. As the hour strikes, they come flying from all quarters; and then there appears on the scene a pretty, golden-haired little girl, dressed in white and blue, and attended either by a man-servant or a *bonne*. Whether there is always some such celestial-looking creature to feed the doves I cannot say; I can only speak of one especial June. When the dainty darling appeared, the doves flew toward her. They lighted on her shoulders, her arms, even her head; she seemed literally covered with them. Like a sweet little special Providence, she dispensed her treasures of grain, and the birds ate and were filled; and then the great crowd of them dispersed slowly, the sweet child who had fed them vanished, and you — who had grown hungry while you watched them — went home to your lunch.

After your morning of shopping and lounging, you are sure to pass the afternoon in a gondola. You go, by canal, to your bank and the post office;

then you drift up to any one of the churches, in which Venice is so rich ; and, be it whichever chances, you are sure to find some picture worth a long journey to behold. In one there is a Santa Barbara, by Palma Vecchio. What a superb creature this woman is, with her velvet robe sweeping grandly to her feet ; her fair, serene face set proudly upon her stately neck ; her dark eyes full of fire, and yet lambent with tenderness ! A saint was she ? I do not know her story ; but it seems to me she was all a woman.

Perhaps you have already seen all the churches, with their wealth of art, — though, if you have, you must have been long in Venice, — and you wish to make an excursion to some of the lovely haunts lying outside the city's limits. You can sail to the island of St. Helena, and find yourselves among flowers and trees in a quiet boscage which might be miles away from the haunts of men, but is really only less than a half-hour's sail from populous Venice ; or you can row over to the Lido, the real sea-shore, with all the accompaniments of a fashionable watering-place.

A still better thing is to go, three quarters of an hour's sail from St. Mark's, to San Lazaro, the island of the Armenians, where is the old monastery in which Lord Byron learned the Armenian language, and where he loved to rest in this so quiet harbor, after

the mad winds and beating tempests which beset his stormy life.

San Lazaro has been in the possession of the Armenian monks since the year 1717, when the Senate of Venice bestowed it upon them as an inalienable possession ; and here they have led, ever since, their holy, peaceful lives, full of activities for good. They welcome visitors most cordially. They show you, in the library, the table at which Lord Byron studied Armenian. They show you his portrait also, and numerous relics of his residence among them. It is evident that, whatever were his faults, he could attach people to himself very strongly. Some of the oldest monks were here during his stay in the convent ; and they speak of him with unforgetful tenderness, as if he had been a beloved son. A beautiful place is this old convent, with its noble architecture, its quiet rooms, and its dear old cloister-garden, where roses bloom among the cypresses and oleanders, and a large, open space serves as a play-ground for the pupils to whose education the monks devote themselves.

Take it all in all, Venice is one of the cheapest cities in Italy to visit. If the *pensions* are somewhat dearer than in Rome or Florence,— and even in this there is no great difference,— no mode of conveyance at once so cheap and luxurious as the gondolas exists elsewhere. You can pass your

dreamy days there in the luxury of an absolute repose. No other place is like it for beauty, and certainly no other is like it for restfulness. Artists fly northward from Rome to Venice with the first hot days, and linger away their enchanted summers here, where the most glorious school of painters the world has ever known lived and died.

Gay belles, who have tired themselves out by a busy winter in Rome or Florence, betake themselves to this City of the Sea, and win back their roses in its quiet. Its spell is on you from the first moment you arrive. It seems to me no one could ever leave it willingly ; and if only the post could be abolished, and no letters would come to call you back to the world outside, you might stay there forever without knowing it,—like the monk who laid his ear so close to heaven that he heard in his dream the songs of Paradise, and awoke to find that he had been listening to them for a thousand years.

IX.

FROM VENICE TO PARIS.

FROM Venice to Verona is only the journey of a few hours, but we could not, without pausing, pass the spot where Romeo and Juliet loved and suffered. Verona is a beautiful old town, and is celebrated, not only for its connection with the sweetest and most romantic of tragedies, but for its wonderful fortifications, which, I am told, are the strongest in Italy, if not in Europe.

We took the regular sight-seeing round ; but the thing which most interested me was the amphitheatre, which is like the Roman Colosseum, on a smaller scale. This amphitheatre made me realize more than ever how grand and how immense the other was in its day.

It was not so picturesque as the glorious old ruins at Rome, but much more complete ; indeed, it is in a very good state of preservation. The *valet-de-place*, who showed us about, whispered, under his breath, as we passed a sort of stone cell, “Here lived the lion !” And into that open arena in the centre

they used to lead the lion, and then send in to him gladiators, or Christians condemned to die for their faith, to make his dainty meal.

What a thing it was to be a Christian in those days, when Christians were hunted like wild beasts, and from the jaws of cruel death went singing their songs of faith and triumph up to heaven's gate ! When, in the Catacombs at Rome, I followed the guide through the windings of those awful, rayless vaults, where no glint of sun, no breath of the free day outside, can penetrate, I felt my eyes grow dim with something besides the darkness ; and, remembering "the dead who had died in the Lord," after a life such as one cannot contemplate without a shiver of horror, I asked myself, "Who is there strong enough, in this age of ease and luxury, to be a Christian, if to be a Christian meant now what it used to mean in those dark ages ?" Something the same thought came to me at Verona, when the guide whispered, "Here lived the lion ! "

We were glad to go from the gloom and silence of the deserted amphitheatre to the gayety and chatter of the market-place, where little old women, with black eyes, bright as beads, kept guard over their stands of fruit and vegetables, under the shelter of great white umbrellas. How fast they talked, and how happy they seemed, and how tempting were their "cherries ripe," and their plums and ap-

ricots, with little bunches of flowers stuck here and there among them. There were a score of living pictures in that one market-place which it was worth going to Verona to see.

We went by the old Capulet mansion, which is turned now into an inn. At least, they *said* it was the Capulet mansion, but I don't believe they knew. Juliet would n't have been Juliet without her balcony looking into the garden, with its roses less bright and sweet than her lips ; and the only balcony of which this house could boast overlooked the noisy street, and was the least likely of places for gallant Romeo to stand beneath, lifting his handsome Southern face into the moonlight, towards her who was his sun, and eclipsed the moon.

There is an air of unreliability about all the relics of Juliet at Verona. We found our way to the deserted monastery, and wandered through its blossomy garden to the tomb where they say she was buried. The long stone sarcophagus, in which they tell us her fair body used to lie, was certainly empty now, save for the wreaths and bunches of flowers which affectionate pilgrims had laid in it. I should have liked to think that the fair Flower of Verona had slept there once, but the guide-book casts a doubt on the matter ; and since guide-books are given to affirmation, and believe all they possibly can, I found it hard to retain my own faith in the

face of Baedeker's incredulity. If Juliet were not buried there, however, she ought to have been, for it was a lovely spot; and, at any rate, here in Verona she lived once, with her beautiful dark eyes, and her warm, bright lips, and the glory of her abundant hair; and somewhere in this old town she has turned to dust, from which, no doubt, flowers are springing as fresh as those she used to wear on her bosom.

From Verona we went to Milan, whose great cathedral is one of the wonders and glories of Italy. One thing is most noticeable in Italy, and that is the unlikeness of every town to every other. Milan is as utterly unlike Florence or Venice as both of these are unlike Rome. It is a clean, new-looking city, extremely well-kept. It is full of life. At seven o'clock, when dinner is over, every one turns into the street. You can hardly hire an open carriage, unless you make an instantaneous rush for it, for every one is driving. You see sumptuous equipages without number, with men in gorgeous liveries; also you see no end of the little hackney open phaetons which can be hired so cheaply. The principal streets seem all alive with people. In front of the cafés, the sidewalks are crowded with tables, at which the Milanese are sipping ices and drinking their after-dinner coffee. From time to time, one carriage after another draws up before these cafés,

and the occupants are served with cakes and ices, which they eat without dismounting, and go on again.

I have scarcely mentioned the cathedral, but it is the first thing and the last which you go to see at Milan. It fills you with wonder when you first look at its countless pinnacles, and the more you examine it, the more your wonder grows. Where were found the patient hands to execute all this marvellous carving, the believing souls to give of their substance the means for a work so costly? I do not *love* it, as I love dreamy, picturesque, solemn old St. Mark's at Venice, or the beautiful Il Duomo of Florence; but this Milan cathedral is far more ornate than either. It is a million-leaved rose of architecture.

Shopping in Milan is the most luxurious thing imaginable. An ingenious American writer, a year or two ago, suggested the manufacture of an artificial climate for invalids, which would do away with the necessity of their flying southward from the inhospitality of our northern winters. One of his plans was to have miles of glass-covered walk, through whose crystal roofs light and air could penetrate, but which would be a complete shelter from wind and rain.

This part of the ingenious gentleman's plan has been already carried out in Milan. In the centre of

the city are the Arcades, crossing each other at right angles. These arcades are roofed with glass. You can walk there for comfortable hours, while the wind blows and the rain rains outside, amused by the windows of as fine shops as there are in the world.

Every article you can imagine, of use or of luxury, is for sale there, and the most indefatigable of shoppers would be content with the variety.

From Milan we journeyed to Paris, *via* Turin. One week only I spent in Paris on my way to London, for I meant to pass the next winter there, and, as the London season was at its height, I had no time to lose. I went to the *salon*, however, and — I am prepared to be called frivolous and light-minded — to the skating-rink. The very greatest painters seldom exhibit in the *salon*. It is rather the field of the rising men. Their elders have taken prizes enough already.

There were rooms, and rooms, and rooms, full of pictures. It would be enough to tire you to death to walk through them all, if among them were not a few of so great merit as to make you forget all weariness. The one which had just taken the first prize was of the Roman Emperor Nero, trying the effect of a new poison upon a slave, and enjoying the sight of his dying agonies. It does not seem, does it, as if human nature could have been so bad ? But if you read the annals of the old Roman Em-

pire, you will see that amusements of this sort were not at all uncommon.

In this picture Nero is painted as a young and handsome man. There is something sensual and perhaps a little cruel about his mouth, but you would not think of that if you did not know he was Nero.

Locusta, the poisoner who invented for him his fatal potions, sits beside him, with one arm carelessly thrown across his knee as she leans forward, watching also, with an eagerness quite equal to that of her imperial master. She is represented as a horrid-looking old hag. The dying slave was a superb fellow, strong-limbed, and with a face that must have been most noble before the fierce anguish of this terrible death contorted it.

There were innumerable portraits of handsome women and ugly women ; of agreeable-looking men and those who were quite otherwise. It seemed as if all France had been seized with a wild desire to have its portrait painted ; but I believe this mania breaks out every year, and fills every successive *salon*.

I said I went to the skating-rink, but I should have said to one of the skating-rinks ; for they are epidemic in Paris, and you come upon them everywhere. I actually know sober married men and women who spend hours of every week-day at

these rinks, and seem to find in them an unfailing charm.

The one I visited is the largest, longest established, and best one in Paris. It is situated upon the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne, which used to be called, in the days of the empire, Avenue de l'Impératrice.

The rink, including its surrounding garden, occupies a whole block, and the building itself is about a hundred feet wide and four hundred feet long ; and the asphalt floor for skating is about sixty feet wide by three hundred long. Over this asphalt floor glide the skaters on their "parlor skates."

They seem to have run mad about skating. It is not in the French nature to take its pleasure moderately. Immensely fat people skate ; tall, lean people skate ; old people skate ; children skate ; everybody who has not a wooden leg, or some other equally insurmountable impediment, skates. You see the greatest variety of costumes, some very fantastic, some of silk and velvet, extremely elegant and costly. The skating is superb. They move so swiftly, they turn so suddenly, it almost makes you dizzy to look at them.

Did I not care to see the relics of the great Napoleon ? Had I no interest in the sad story of the Bourbons ? Did I think nothing of palaces and galleries ? Ah, yes, I cared for them all ; but *they* will remain till I go back again, while, meantime, the

salon would be closed, and, according to present indications, the skating-rink would be so crowded that there would be no corner of vantage from which a quiet observer like myself could look and wonder.

X.

THE LONDON SEASON.

I REACHED London for the second time the middle of June, when the season was at its height. And a dizzy height it is. There were flower-shows, and cricket-matches, and turnouts of the Four-in-Hand Club, and scores of similar diversions, besides the absolutely never-ending round of dinners and lunches, and breakfasts and balls, and kettle-drums and *musicales*, and parties of every kind and description.

Everybody and his wife and daughter come up to London for the season. Noble lords return to their superbly appointed town-houses. Country squires hire modest mansions in order to give their daughters the benefit of a little outing in London. People of yet more moderate means take apartments. Somehow or other, everyone gets there; and all the comers join like dancing dervishes in the mad whirl going on about them. It is no unusual thing for a lady to go in the same day to a breakfast, three or four kettle-drums, a state dinner, and one or two parties afterwards.

The first evening I was there I went to a public dinner, at which a certain noble earl presided in gloomy grandeur. From there we went the same night to a charming literary party. It was a regular crush, and I don't think there was a man or woman there not in some way connected with art or literature.

Poets were thick as blackberries ; novelists were making social studies for their next novels ; artists surveyed you critically, and looked as if they wanted to paint your portrait. Songs were sung of which some poet present had composed the words, and for which the fair creature who sung them had written her own music.

There are two sets of society in London, each thinking itself the best, but differing very widely. There is the ultra-fashionable set, where you always meet the dear Duchess. I don't know why all duchesses are dear ; but perhaps it is because of the convenient alliteration. I met three of her, at one musical afternoon, and, take her all and singly, she was an uninspiring old lady. It took the very wildest imagination to fancy that she had been young once, and possibly pretty ; that tender nothings had called pink flushes to the cheeks whose present hue no emotion would cause to vary. She dressed in a fashion quite her own, and yet *à propos* to nothing in her face, or figure, or time of life ;

but who asks anything more of her than that she should be the dear Duchess ? In these circles which the dear Duchess adorns you seldom hear much talk of books. As a handsome captain in the Life Guards said to me, "I think I should like reading, but it 's such a busy world, and a fellow can't get time for everything, you know." In this world of fashion, you hear chatter about drawing-rooms, and dinners, and Hurlingham, and lawn-parties, and a thousand *fêtes*, that sound enchanting, but that all mean the same thing when you come to them, — fine clothes, and long pilgrimages in search of an opportunity to say a dozen words apiece to an infinite number of people. The only entertainment at which anything like conversation is possible is a dinner, and then, ten chances to one, you are seated beside some one who has not an idea or an interest in common with yourself.

It is just the same thing in that other set of society, the literary and artistic. The subjects of conversation are different. Everybody has books, or pictures, or German music on the brain ; and everybody goes about sighing for an opportunity, which never really comes, to air his or her opinions.

"Have you read — Ah yes, good evening, Mrs. Brown ! Have you read" — but just then Mr. Jones comes up, and you never know what was the book in question.

You have longed, perhaps, all your reading life to

meet Robert Browning, and there he is ; but you have only an instant in which to look unutterable things as you are presented to him, and no space in which to elucidate the sad puzzle of your life,—why, with all the uttermost wealth of scholarship, all the resources of art, all the treasures of experience at his command, he should voluntarily choose to write more and more obscurely as time goes on. You will never find out, to a certainty ; but you conclude that it is on the general principle of English association,—the determination that people shall know as little about one as possible.

You have your dreams of an ideal society — a new social republic — in which those people only shall meet who really want to see each other. They shall make quiet appointments, and keep them quietly, going to these social encounters without hurry or fatigue, with minds fresh enough to be receptive, and ready to exchange ideas and not merely compliments. The bond of this true society shall be mutual adaptation and mutual interest. They shall know each other really, and not superficially ; and they shall go away from these serene symposia refreshed in body and soul. I know some houses in my own country where a distant approach is made to this high ideal. In France there must have been much of that sort of thing in those fascinating old days when Time forgot Madame Ré-

camier, and she sat in her perpetual white gowns, and smiled and listened, while old Chateaubriand came to her with his egotisms, and young Ampère with his enthusiasms. But the glory of French society has passed away, with the polished old days when the hours were longer because less crowded, when men had leisure to talk and women to listen. In the fast and furious whirl of the last Empire you had to search for true society as for four-leaved clover ; and at present, under the *bourgeoise régime* of the presidents, you find neither the stately courtesy of the long past, nor even the gayety, fascinating because of its very recklessness, of the days when Eugénie the Beautiful wore the prettiest dresses in Europe.

London society in the season gives you no hours of tranquil enjoyment. From the time you open your eyes till they close sleepily again the next morning there is no rest for the wicked, or even for the good. One would not mind the weariness of it all if it resulted in anything ; if real friendships were formed, kindred minds encountered, thought quickened, or faith revived ; but, so far as I can see, nothing of this sort is either attempted or desired. The whole thing appears to be a burden to the participants. Those who live out of London come up to town with the air of martyrs, not of pleasure-seekers. Each year, I am told, they come a little

later than before, or leave a little earlier, or take a longer vacation at Easter.

In spite of the sharp line between literary London and fashionable London, there are a few exceptional people, like Lord Houghton, who have been born and bred among the fashionables, and yet have an elective affinity with the intellectual workers, and thus belong to both sets, and are with both equally popular.

But these are the rarest exceptions. Usually the fashionable set affects a sort of mild, half contemptuous pity for the poor souls who have nothing better to do than to write books,—who have no game to preserve, no balls to give, no drags to drive.

By the way, this driving of drags is just now the favorite pastime of "the nobility and gentry," as the upper classes are respectfully designated in advertisements.

A drag is the reproduction of the old-fashioned English stage-coach, but it is finished with the utmost luxury and elegance. The inside of the vehicle is very seldom occupied, though there must be solid comfort in feeling that it awaits you always as a refuge in case of rain. But the high-born ladies and gentlemen who are the passengers ride always on the top of the drag, from which sublime height they can look down on the world below, the plebeian world, walking pensively on the sidewalks, or driving economically but madly in hansom cabs.

The noble owner of the drag always drives it himself. Some beaming beauty sits beside him to admire the skill with which he manages his four spirited horses. Back of the driver sit his guests,—a merry company; at least, merry they always seem.

I used to wonder if one left all the ills of life behind when one climbed upon a drag. Whether toothache, for instance, never pursued you to that exalted height, or headache, or, by chance, indigestion. Duns, of course, could not reach up so high; and if one could trust appearances, happiness was always a passenger.

Yet I heard one story which seemed to me pathetic about a drag. A celebrated London novelist told it me, and I beg his pardon if I am depriving him of it for a future book. He said almost the best-appointed drag he ever knew in London was not owned, as these expensive vehicles usually are, by some well-known man of rank and fashion. Like other drags, it was driven by its owner, but who that owner was no one knew. At just such an hour every afternoon, my friend said, this drag always passed by his house, the owner driving with a certain solemn stateliness, as if conscious of the intense gravity, the exalted demands, of the occasion.

Beside him sat his wife, radiant as a sunflower, in some gorgeous toilet, she, also, taking her pleasure

solemnly. Behind them were their children three. Every detail of the drag was perfect; but there never was any change, either in its occupants, or in the hours at which it passed and repassed.

My novel-writing friend naturally had his curiosity excited, and sought and ascertained the story of this stately mystery. The owner of the drag had been an innkeeper once,—a jolly, happy man in those humble days. But an uncle of his made an immense fortune in Australia, and, dying, left it to this honest nephew.

Men of fashion enough had stopped at the poor fellow's inn to give him some notion of their habits. He felt that with this great fortune had come to him the necessity to be a gentleman. He could not buy early training, delicate culture, high-bred ways, but he could buy a splendid house, and have a good upholsterer put it in order; and this he did.

Then he disposed of his inn on the top of Harrow Hill to an old innkeeping crony, and went into his new house with his elated family.

He was absolutely without friends. He had put off in one moment all the associations he had been a lifetime in forming, as if they were worn-out garments. He was utterly incapable of attaching to himself new acquaintances in a new line of life.

But he had one taste; he knew good horses when he saw them. Very likely he had been hostler be-

fore he was innkeeper. So he fitted himself up a drag, and the horses he drove were a luxury just to look at. And every afternoon, he and his wife and his children, his man-servants and his horses, made a pilgrimage to the old inn on the top of Harrow Hill, and bought of his old crony, the innkeeper, a bottle of choice old gin.

I doubt very much if this gin was ever drunk. I don't suppose he really wanted it. What he did want was an object for his drive, and a few moments' talk with a fellow-creature he had known once; and of course it would never do for a fine gentleman who could own a drag to go and talk to a Harrow Hill innkeeper without an errand.

The meets of the Four-in-Hand Club are great vents in London. Throngs assemble in the Park to see the sight. Nothing could be finer in its way. The drivers are the first gentlemen in the kingdom. Their turnouts are the most perfect affairs which combined money and good taste can procure. They meet at noon in Hyde Park, and then drive off to some appointed rendezvous, a score of miles away.

Art and nature have conspired to make Hyde Park beautiful; and art and nature have conspired also towards the perfection of the human beings one encounters there. From twelve till two of a morning, and again from five till seven of an afternoon, the

Park is thronged with the beauty and the chivalry of England.

“The Ring” is full of carriages, and “the Ladies’ Mile” is full of riders. As a rule, I think English girls ride better than English men, though there is plenty of good horsemanship among the latter. They are outdone, however, by their grooms, who seem to have been born in the saddle.

I am more and more convinced of the beauty of English girls. In the whole world, I fancy, you will hardly find brighter and sweeter faces than those that beam out upon you in Hyde Park from under the tall, mannish riding-hats, or flash upon you from sudden carriages as they pass. I think that carping Frenchman, Mr. Taine, who sees no charm in the English fair, can never have driven in Hyde Park in the season.

To drive there, indeed, is an expensive pleasure. The ordinary hansom cabs, or shabby four-wheelers of the street, can by no means enter those haughty gates. If you do not own a carriage, you must hire a properly-appointed brougham from some stable, with a driver who wears livery and plays at being a private coachman.

Whether you went out much or little into the streets, you somehow felt yourself part of the general whirl. It was a pleasant thing to get away from it sometimes, and take a quiet drive into the

quiet country. Perhaps you are invited by some friend to go to Richmond and dine at the Star and Garter.

You accept eagerly, for you can scarcely have read an English tale without chancing upon some mention of this well-known place of resort. The heroes and heroines of English novels are always going there. It is to be hoped they are all rich,—these heroes and heroines,—for the Star and Garter nothing extenuates in the matter of charges, and a poor hero could never afford to go.

The drive to Richmond is very lovely, and the view from the Star and Garter is worthy all the praise it has so long been the fashion to bestow on it. As to your dinner, it is simply perfect, from whitebait to ices.

Dinner over,—and be sure that it is by no means a brief ceremony,—you wander out to the Park, along the beautiful Thames, nowhere so beautiful as here; and then you drive back to town by the light of the setting sun and young moon.

If you want to go to Windsor, or Tunbridge, or any one of half-a-dozen other places, you can take a seat in a coach driven by a gentleman driver.

Of all the avocations pursued by the aforesaid “nobility and gentry” of England, none would seem so strange to the average American as this whim of amateur coach-driving. Fancy a rich man, not in-

frequently a titled man, devoting himself, day after day, to patiently driving a coach always to the same place. He charges pay for your trip, like an ordinary coachman. The place beside him is the place of honor, and you pay two or three shillings more to ride there. He does not need this money,—he simply receives it as a means of putting strangers at their ease, and providing himself with passengers of that respectable sort who are able to pay, and would not go without paying. But how queer a freak for a man, endowed by happy chance with rank and fortune, to turn himself into a coachman, and do his daily task as regularly as the driver of a horse-car!

There were other quiet hours in the gay London season besides those when one went out of town. I remember the happy stillness of certain homes. The Saturday afternoons, for instance, when Jean Ingelow — that sweet singer whose graceful verses are so well-known in America — called together her friends, and gave them tea and strawberries and ices, in her large and lovely garden, were seasons of such tranquil rest and refreshment as one does not soon forget. The talk flowed peacefully, the poetess herself leading it into pleasant ways.

She is not young, this singer of sweet songs, but she has the gracious calm of happy middle-age about her. The higher peace of a sincere Christian

faith is hers also, for she has never been assailed by the doubts of this doubting century.

Christina Rossetti, whose work is less sunny and more subtile than Miss Ingelow's, is middle-aged also; and she, too, is at rest in a serene faith. It is a curious fact that, while so many of the men of letters of our time have lost their hold on Christianity altogether, the three greatest among our women poets, Mrs. Browning, Miss Ingelow, and Miss Rossetti, have been devout and saintly souls.

XI.

NOVEL-WRITING, AND THE "INTENSE."

THE habit of novel-writing is, I think, peculiar to England. Not that novels are not written in other countries, but it is nowhere else a national habit; novelists in society are the exception, and not the rule. Among my first experiences in London was an æsthetic evening at a certain pleasant house where one is sure to meet, in the course of the season, all that is discreetest, virtuousest, best, in London society. I had been but a few moments in the room before I heard someone say to my hostess, near whom I was standing, "And how is your novel?" in the same solicitous and friendly tone with which one inquires in America after the health of a child, or in most London houses after the well-being of the pet dog. *Nota bene*, let Fate do her worst for a London woman, she will yet have her dog. If the bailiffs keep her furniture, she still keeps the dog. But to return to the novel. Its condition was satisfactorily explained, and comments were made thereon of the most cheerful nature. Then came a second question.

"And your daughter, how is —" I thought the questioner was about to say "her health?" and I marvelled, since the young lady stood by, blushing like a wild rose; but no, it was "how is her novel?"

"Ah, thanks, she has got it into the third volume. She is killing the hero to-day."

I thought for a moment of this beautiful harmony of taste and pursuit between mother and daughter; but I saw presently that, like the ripple that follows when a pebble is cast into the water, this novel interest was a circle that widened as it went.

One friend of the family drew nigh after another. Here was a professed novelist, who always has a serial going on both sides of the Atlantic. Of course her novel was tenderly inquired after; but that did not surprise me. Why should n't she write novels? it was her nature to. But then came a lady whose specialty is to compose music,—little music, I suppose, since the critics say no woman ever did or will compose great music. I thought they would ask about her last waltz or her budding sonata. But no, it was still the same question,

"Ah, my dear, and how is your novel?"

Why was this thus? Why had she turned from counterpoint to counterparts, from the sharps and flats of the piano to those of society? But I soon

saw she was but bitten by an almost universal madness. Here was a traveller, who writes the most entertaining adventures by land and sea, turning sentimental and melodramatic on our hands and perpetrating his first novel.

"There is So-and-so the poet," whispered my hostess, as a new guest approached. I thought he would be asked about his epic or his ode ; but no, it was still, "And your novel, my dear fellow ?"

"Oh ! ah ! yes ; it's dreadfully slow, you know. I'm in the middle of the second volume, and the thing won't work to suit me."

Instantly the poet was flooded with condolences and suggestions. Did he want more incidents ? Well, he could always kill somebody ; or there were elopements and bigamies, and any number of things, some of them nice but all of them naughty ; or there could be a fire, or a runaway horse. The poet listened ; but there was a certain lofty scorn of these too *banale* counsels in the curl of his silent lip.

Then came an editor, a grave and serious man, as is the nature of his calling ; a sad man, as he must be who sees so much of this world's woe and folly ; and even he was asked the familiar question ; and I found that his "life diversified itself," as an English friend of mine rather grandly phrased it, by fiction.

"Is there anybody here who does n't write novels?" I timidly whispered to the young, pretty, and novel-writing daughter of my hostess. I thought if I could find the person who had no novel on his mind I should be more at home. Mademoiselle smiled. "Oh, yes!" she said, "there are a few who only read them at present. They are in training, you know. And there is that benevolent-looking, middle-aged gentleman, — *he* only writes plays."

This seemed to me a relief. A playwright, I fancied, might be less formidable than a maker of actual books; so I moved over to the benevolent-looking gentleman, and spoke him fairly, — so fairly, indeed, that before I had done with him he confided to me that he was just about commencing a novel, and what did I think of the name of his heroine?

I have recorded literally the events of one short evening. I met at least a score of other people during that same season, at that same house, who were writing novels; but, as I wish not to exaggerate, I give you only the foundations for my first impression, that in England novel-writing is a habit. I think it is in the air. Fogs, no doubt, are favorable to fiction. At any rate, from some cause or other, the epidemic is universal. I even felt stirrings of it in myself, and I felt quite sure that if I stayed there long enough I should break out in three volumes.

Read the publishers' advertisements, and you will see how universal is this habit of novel-writing. Titled people and commoners have alike yielded to it. Miss and Mrs.; priest and layman — indeed, the last new novel I have taken up announces pompously on its title-page that it is by a clergyman. As I looked over the book, I could fancy the desperation of forlorn hope on the part of the publishers when they printed that fact as the one claim these three volumes could reasonably make on the patience of the public. They are full, naturally, these clerical volumes, of spiritual conundrums and moral reflections. "Why," asks the author, "why may not a beauteous girl be loved at once alike?" I have not the thinnest ghost of an idea as to what this question may mean; but I don't myself see any objection to a "beauteous girl" being loved "at once," whatever may be said about the "alike." A little farther on, our story-teller is advocating marriages out of hand, and without waiting for any such poor and small formalities as marriage settlements. How pathetically he cries out that "Hope deferred makes the heart sick; and possibly the heart may almost sicken of the whole object: while mind, and body, and affection, and all, are embittered and attenuated by keeping two fresh young bosoms, which belong to each other, needlessly and heartlessly apart!"

This passage, also, seems a little blind to me ; indeed the book rivals “Sordello” in obscurity ; but, if I divine aright the author’s meaning, he thinks marriages should be hurried, lest people should fall out of love with each other. Now, my mind is eminently unecclesiastical, but to a lay-woman like myself it would have seemed better to test love by a little waiting ; and if “mind, body, and affection, and all” (whatever “all” may mean), would become “embittered and attenuated” by the law’s delays during the progress of the marriage settlement, to stop there, and settle finally that there should be no marriage. That the style of the reverend gentleman who writes this novel should be somewhat exalted and uncommon is partly owing, no doubt, to his profession. To write a novel after the manner of ordinary mortals would, probably, have seemed to him too unclerical, so he strains all his points. He always says “beauteous,” instead of beautiful ; he speaks of the back of a young man’s neck as his “cervical, occipital department” ; and when people die, he talks of “their lamps of life being extinguished.” But this all comes of his being a clergyman, who is obliged by the custom of his country to write novels.

This realm of novel-writers is also the natural home of the “intense.” Maudle and Postlethwaite are indigenous to its soil. Pre-Raphaelitism is a

much abused word ; but whatever it means, you find its disciples blooming like flowers in literary and artistic London. The toilets of Englishwomen are more individualized than our own. My grandfather had a quaint old housekeeper, whose favorite expression of contempt for anything that did not please her eye was, "It looks like an old pictur'." I think that to look like an old picture is the one ambition in life of many Englishwomen. You are constantly meeting these picturesque women in society. They scorn the dress of the period ; they reject flounces, and frown at flutings, but they copy some old beauty of dead centuries just as faithfully as their more frivolous and light-minded French sister copies a modern fashion-plate. I went to a certain private concert, where you must be artistic or nothing. I saw one lovely little creature with a gown of dark brocade, cut in a fashion of long ago. The waist was short ; the skirt had a bunch of gathers at the belt, but clung scantily and quite without ornament about the feet. The sleeves were puffed, and slashed with pink ; the neck was square, and a rose-lined ruff shut in her slender throat as a calyx does a flower. She was so pretty, this little humming-bird of a woman, that her fantastic gown seemed only to enhance and adorn her beauty ; yet it was a costume so peculiar that no one but an Englishwoman would have worn it save at a *bal masqué*.

Near her sat another lady, not pretty, unfortunately, and not of the humming-bird type ; and this lady was also like an old picture, but a picture that had no claim on immortality. She wore a brocade, too, but it was of light color, and covered with immense flowers. It suggested the stock of an upholsterer, and would have been lovely by way of window-drapery. It was made in a curious, loose-fitting mode, as if anything like a fit had been avoided on principle ; and it was excessively unbecoming to both the face and figure of the wearer. Beauty is its own excuse for being ; but eccentricity that is not beautiful does not commend itself to the general taste.

To do the artistic seems to be the besetting mania of a large class of London society. Their drawing-rooms are museums ; their chairs may not be comfortable, but that matters little if only they are unmistakably old-fashioned. You go into some rooms which seem to you like a mug of old china, and their fair occupants like shepherdesses sitting thereon, and smiling serenely at the changes of time. The talk in these rooms is artistic too : no *banale* theme finds place there. The very air seems rarefied ; and if you have the least trace of the every-day world about you, you experience a certain difficulty in breathing. You will hear pictures spoken of, and classical music, and certain poems ; but

not novels : they are too human and modern for this exalted and artistic society. To hear them talk, you would think the world had been going wrong ever since the Middle Ages ; and you wonder, when supper is served, to be confronted with such modern inventions as silver forks, such luxuries of to-day as salads and cakes. This phase of society reminds me of a little American town where philosophy of the most radical type is the order of the day ; for in America we have our own pet affectations, though they are not English.

In this little town live Ralph Waldo Emerson, our great transcendental philosopher, and A. Bronson Alcott, whose mission it is to instruct the degenerate world in conversation as a fine art, and strive to imbue the moderns with the old Greek thought and aspiration. Here, in his too brief day, also lived Thoreau, the poet-naturalist. One day, in Thoreau's time, a high intellectual symposium was going on, and an innocent, simple-minded woman, who had strayed into these enchanted regions from outside, lingered and listened. At last, carried out of herself, she cried, "Why, Mr. Thoreau, it seems to me that you are going backward to Paganism !" The philosopher surveyed her with a look that made her feel all her littleness. Then he bowed grandly, and enunciated, in sublime tones, "Say, rather, *forward* to Paganism, madam."

Similarly I think that a certain portion of English society feels itself to be going forward to the Middle Ages. The passion for the mediæval extends even to children. You will see them dressed as much like old pictures as their mammas, and their very prattle is attuned to high art. For high art's sake English people of a certain set live, move, and have their being. They lie down in strange beds, and sit in cumbrous chairs : they clothe themselves like the women Titian and Giorgione painted : and they find their reward, for they are as charming as they are peculiar.

XII.

THE LONDON CABBY.

IN the interest of truth I am compelled to confess that cabmen — or as we call them, hack-drivers — are not, even in America, the most agreeable members of community. They are so far transcended, however, in what the author of "Pike County Ballads" calls "pure cussedness" by the London cabby, that the American Jehu, so long lost to my sight, became very dear to my memory. It is something to live in a country where any man may become President, if he be clever enough. With the self-satisfaction natural to his sex, each driver has a sublime faith in his own possibilities, and shows a certain mercy toward the sovereign people on whom his future fortunes may depend. To be sure, he is bad enough. He has a trick of asking you where you want to go with an air of friendly interest, and then, when you have been beguiled into confiding to him your destination, discovering that it is too far out of his beat, and leaving you to wait on the sidewalk while he summons a brother

in arms whose stables are in your direction. But at least, he does not insult you, you are not afraid of your life, and you have a vehicle to ride in which, compared to a London four-wheeler, is something princely.

Shall I ever forget my first solitary experience of the tender mercies of a London cabby? I had been there two weeks, perhaps, and had been driven here and there in friendly company ; but at last I was to venture forth alone. It was a Sunday afternoon,—a lovely June day, which should have produced a melting mood even in the hard heart of a cabby. I had been bidden to an informal five o'clock tea at the house of a certain poet in a certain quiet "road" among the many "roads" of Kensington. An American friend put me sadly but hopefully into a hansom. I asked him how much I was to pay, and was told eighteenpence. I always ask this question by way of precaution ; but I have found since that there is usually a sad discrepancy of opinion between my friend at the beginning and my driver at the end of the route ; however, I had not learned this fact at that early epoch.

"Eighteenpence," said my friend. "I think you'll be all right ; but if there's any trouble, you know, you must ask for his number, and I'll have him up for you to-morrow."

I thought he was pretty well "up" already. In-

deed the upness, if I may coin a word, of the driver is the most extraordinary thing about a hansom.

I heard my friend announce the street and number of my destination, and the sweet little cherub that sat up aloft make reply,—

“The lady knows where she’s a-goin’, don’t she?” and then we drove away. To me the drive did not seem long. As I have said, it was a day in June,—

“Sweet day, so pure, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky.”

I could not see much of the sky, however, but I caught, when I strained my eyes upward, glimpses of a great, deep, blue dome, with white clouds drifting across it now and then, like the wings of gigantic birds. As we got a little out of the thick of the town, the sweet breath of roses from gardens in bloom filled the air; in the gentle breeze the tree-boughs waved lazily; there was everywhere a brooding warmth and peace, which I pleased my democratic heart by thinking that cabby must also enjoy. Was he not grateful to me, I wondered, for taking him a little off his accustomed track into these pleasant paths? Suddenly my reverie was broken by his voice. He had opened the trap in the roof, and was calling down to me from his perch,—

“Which o’ them turns, ma’am?”

I had never been in Kensington before. I looked on in front, and down the cross-street at each side. Instinct failed me ; I had not even a conjecture to hazard. I answered mildly, —

“ Why, I don’t know, I’m sure.”

“ Oh, you don’t know, don’t you ? Well, then, I’m sure *I* don’t. The gentleman said as *you* knew where you was a-goin’, or I would n’t a’ took you.”

Then I spoke severely. The dignity of a free-born American asserted itself. I said, —

“ *I* am not driving this cab. *I* wish to go to 163 Blank Road, but it is not my business to find the way. You can ask the first policeman you see.”

But the peace of the June afternoon was over. It seemed to me that the very hansom moved sullenly. We kept bringing up with a jerk at some corner, while cabby shouted out his inquiry, and then we went on again. At last we reached Blank Road. I saw the name on a street-sign, and soon we drew up before 163. I extracted eighteenpence from my purse, and handed it with sweet serenity to my charioteer. Words fail me to describe the contempt upon his expressive countenance. He turned the money over in his hand and looked at it, as a naturalist might at a curious insect. At length he demanded, in a tone which implied great self-control on his part, —

“ Will you tell me what this ‘ere money is fur ? ”

"It is your fare," I said, with a smile which should have melted his heart, but did n't.

"My fare, is it ?" and his voice rose to a wild shriek. "My fare, is it ? And you take me away, on a Sunday afternoon, from a beat where I was gettin' a dozen fares an hour, and bring me to this God-forsaken place, and then offer me one-and-six-pence ! My fare ! I ought to 'ave a crown ; and a 'alf a crown is the very least as I 'll take."

I took out another silver shilling, and handed it to him ; but I felt that I had the dignity of an American to maintain. I remembered what my friend had told me, and I said loftily,—

"And now I will take your number, if you please."

"Yes, I'll give you my number. Oh, yes, you shall 'ave my number and welcome !" and he tore off from somewhere a sort of tin plate with figures on it. I had been accustomed to the printed slip which every French *cocher* hands you without asking ; and it occurred to me that this metal card was rather clumsy, and that if he carried many such about him they must somewhat weigh down his pockets ; but I knew that England was a country where they believed in making things solid and durable, and I supposed it was quite natural that cabbies should present their passengers with metal numbers instead of paper ones ; so, holding the

thing gingerly in my hand, I marched tranquilly up the steps of my friend's house.

I have seen in Italy and elsewhere various pictures of the descent of the fallen and condemned, but I think even Michael Angelo might have caught a new inspiration from the descent of my cabby. He plunged — I can think of no other word — down from his height, tore the badge from my trembling fingers, and shook his hard and brawny fist within the eighth of an inch of my tip-tilted nose.

“ ‘Ow dare you,” he screamed, “ ‘ow dare you be makin’ off with my badge? I’ll ‘ave *you* up, hif you don’t mind your heye.”

And, indeed, I thought my eye very likely to need minding. But he mounted his perch again, badge in hand, and poured out imprecations like a flood, while I pulled frantically at bell and knocker. When at last I was in my friend’s drawing-room, I told my troubrous tale.

“ Oh, I hope you have his number,” said my host.

“ No, he took it away, as I’m telling you.”

“ Oh, but don’t you remember it? You should have taken it down with a pencil.”

Then I discovered what my mistake had been.

I have never, since that first adventure with the London cabby, encountered anything quite so formidable and terrifying; but I still feel that the

London Jehu is a being to be dreaded. My second experience of him was to drive under his auspices to a dinner-party. I gave him eighteenpence for a distance which I have since learned only entitled him to a shilling. He was a very polite cabman, quite the politest cabman I have ever seen. He regarded his one-and-sixpence with a gentle smile, a little tinged with melancholy. Then he touched his hat and said most respectfully, —

“I begs your pardon, but I thinks has you don’t know the distances. No lady has did know would give me less than two shillings.”

I gave him another sixpence. I should have done so even if I had known better, his courtesy was so beguiling. He thanked me sweetly ; then he said, —

“About what time would my lady be going ‘ome ? If I’m hin this neighborhood I’ll come for you.”

I told him that I did not know ; but he was evidently better informed than I was, for at about eleven o’clock a servant came to me and told me that the cabman who brought me was waiting for me ; so I submitted to destiny and went home under his banner.

Since then I have made the acquaintance of all sorts of cabmen. One of my latest adventures was with one who had committed the slight but pardonable error of mistaking whiskey for beer, and so was

rather inclined to darken knowledge with want of understanding. It was a four-wheeler which he drove, and he was certainly agile of limb and anxious to do his duty, for at least once in every five minutes he presented himself at my window and asked in a most ingratiating manner if I would tell him just where I wanted to go. I suppose I told him some twenty times or more before we arrived at our not distant destination. Faithful to the last, he dismounted again and rang the bell ; but this final politeness had nearly proved too much for him, for he fell his length in coming down the steps. He picked himself up, however, and jauntily handed me from his chariot, took the fare I gave him with thanks, and parted from me on the kindest terms.

I have often wondered whether, if I had had the honor to have been born in London, my experience of cabby would have been just the same, or whether, even to his often bleared but perhaps not undiscriminating eyes, it is evident that I am a foreigner.

XIII.

THE PARKS OF LONDON.

DURING "the season" a great part of London life goes on in these green breathing-places, the Parks, where one makes a visit to Nature, walks under blue skies, over soft greensward, beneath the shelter of stateliest trees, and yet meets there the world of fashion, and feels that Dame Nature herself is receiving company, and is dressed for the occasion.

Of these great parks, Hyde Park is the most fashionable. It is situated in the most aristocratic part of London, and through the season it is to the metropolis what the drive along the shore is to a watering-place. You are sure to see here all the world.

Houses in the vicinity of Hyde Park bring fabulous rents. All the streets and squares in its neighborhood take its name, as a title of honor, after their own; as for instance, Norfolk Square, Hyde Park, Connaught Square, etc. You have Hyde Park Corner, Hyde Park Place, Park Street, and Park Lane; this last being the most fashionable strip of houses in all London.

To Hyde Park come every morning in the season,

between twelve and two, horsemen and horsewomen, mounted on the finest horses in the world, to ride under the pleasant shade of its greenery. The place railed off for this purpose is called the Ladies' Mile. It is hedged outside with spectators, who, if they are not able to procure themselves grooms and horses, can at least look on, and persuade themselves, by a little making-believe, that they are sharing the gay delights of the London season.

In the afternoon, from three to six, driving is at its height. There is plenty of riding also. The Row is thronged with carriages, superbly appointed, with coachmen and footmen in livery.

In some of these carriages you see such lovely faces, —young girls who have just come up from the country for their first season, who have spirits and health enough to carry them on through the excitement which from the first of May to the end of June is at its height, and is full enough of diversions to tire out the strongest.

Then you see faces somewhat older, but scarcely less beautiful, for whom the thing is no longer a novelty. There is a look on these last which says, “Is this all?” And yet they smile, and bow, and greet their friends, and go on in the same round of pleasure, day after day, until enjoyment gives place to satiety.

I think the saddest sight is the elderly and dis-

contented countenances one often sees, of fat, heavy, disappointed-looking women, for whom life has done its poor best in the way of worldly prosperity. Nothing could be more superb than their surroundings. They have all the distinction that rank can confer, all the good cheer that money can buy ; but the shop where contentment is sold they have never found.

St. James's Park is overlooked by Buckingham Palace, and by the old St. James's Palace, which used to be the royal residence, and led to the English Court being called the Court of St. James.

Buckingham Palace is the present residence of the Queen when she is in London. It is here that she holds her drawing-rooms, at which hundreds of ladies bow over her venerable hand, and then retreat backwards, much embarrassed by the trains, three yards in length, which etiquette exacts that they shall wear.

In this Park is Bird-Cage Walk, where King Charles II. used to march up and down with the courtiers and beauties of his reign. St. James's Park is pervaded by a certain sweet and verdurous calm. It has beautiful water, in which stately trees are shadowed. It is fragrant, on the late spring evenings, with rich incense of thorn and lilac. All day the sunshine tangles itself in its green boughs, and the birds sing in them as if they were at home in the wildwood.

The Regent's Park is the people's park. It is very large and very pleasant,—a haunt beloved of nursemaids and children, and populous with perambulators. It connects delightful suburbs with London proper; and there are plenty of London business men whose daily path to their down-town vocations is through its peaceful walks.

There is good music there on summer evenings, and it is a pleasant sight to see the people, the real people, promenading up and down, and enjoying themselves after their busy, weary day. Here are the famous Zoölogical Gardens, and their inhabitants demonstrate their neighborhood very loudly and clamorously about feeding-time. The lion roars, the bear growls, and the hyena chimes in with his discordant laugh, as if he and his savage companions were a huge joke.

There are plenty of other parks,—Finsbury Park, Victoria Park, and Battersea Park, beloved of gypsies, where you see strange camp-fires, and come upon men and women of mysterious origin, claiming darkly-prophetic gifts.

But after Hyde Park, the loveliest of all is the one called Kensington Gardens, which is, indeed, a direct continuation of Hyde Park, connecting it with Kensington, the Old Court Suburb.

In the midst of Kensington Gardens stands Kensington Palace, where the present Queen was born,

in 1819. It boasts nothing in the way of beauty, this old palace, but it has numbered among its royal occupants William of Orange, sickly and anxious ; taciturn Queen Anne : solemn and silent George I. ; George II., short and bumptious, and yet beloved so much beyond his deserts by his good Queen Caroline. There was something very touching in her wifely devotion to her fussy, unimaginative husband. She used to accompany him on his hunting expeditions, at great discomfort to herself, for she was a stout old lady, and she came to her death at last by plunging her gouty limbs into cold water, that she might be able to go out with him.

In Kensington Gardens met all the wits and courtiers of four successive reigns. Ghosts of the past haunt my fancy as I wander there. I see ladies walking under towering top-knots of hair, and flirting gigantic fans, with little black patches of court-plaster, put on to enhance the fairness of their pretty faces, and wearing the widespread hoops which so delighted Thomson, the poet, that he wrote,—

“The hoop, the darling justly of the fair,
Of every generous swain deserves the care.”

In close attendance on the stately dames came gallant cavaliers,—noblemen, poets, wits.

The Kensington Garden promenades were popu-

lar, Leigh Hunt tells us, throughout the whole of the first three Georges' reigns, but flourished most, as far as names and fashion were concerned, during those of the first and second, numbering among their *habitues* Lady Suffolk, Mary Bellenden, Mary Lepell, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Prior, Congreve, Steele, Young, Addison, Lord Chesterfield, Selwyn, Horace Walpole,—a list, indeed, of the fair and the illustrious with which I might fill a column and not exhaust it.

During the long period when the Gardens were in their glory, fashion waxed and waned through almost all the vicissitudes of wigs, cocked hats, and hoop-petticoats.

The gentlemen began with the full-bottomed peruke, in the time of George I., and went on from variety to variety in ugliness of costume ; and the ladies, of course, outdid them. The head-dresses rose and fell in all the fluctuations of piled-up and flowing hair ; of ringlets, plain and powdered ; of lappets, laces, ribbons, feathers, hoods, bonnets, and mob-caps. “Their colors,” we are told, “were of the brightest and most blooming kind. The fan was in constant requisition, and muffs increased from small to great.”

They have all passed from the stage long ago,—these strangely-clad belles and beaux of the old time,—but Kensington Gardens are as fair as ever, and

only clothe themselves, each spring, with the same old-new fashion of soft verdure. The winds are gentle in the deep peace of those trees ; the tempered sunshine sifts through them kindly, and the ghosts of the fair and stately past have it their own way. The palace is given up to memories, and careless children sail their toy-boats all day long on the strip of water in front of it, or throw biscuit to the slow-gliding swans.

XIV.

IN WARWICKSHIRE.

ONE of the pleasantest little trips out of London is to Warwickshire. We went in August, and stopped for three days at Leamington, whence it is an easy drive to Warwick Castle, Kenilworth, and Stratford-on-Avon.

Naturally, our first excursion was to Stratford-on-Avon. I have no special sympathy with the sentimental traveller, who bottles up his emotions like soda-water, and has them ready to "fizz" to order on every suitable occasion. But I must confess that I felt a strange thrill at my heart as I drove into the quaint old town where the one only Shakespeare of the world lived, and loved, and died.

We came first to the house where Shakespeare was born, and where he lived much of his life. The house in which he died is no longer standing. The one where he was born is a rather large, old-fashioned stone house, with two gables fronting the street, two stories high, and with a pointed roof.

Over the front door is a pointed portico, and the whole exterior of the house indicates a certain amount both of taste and prosperity in the Shakespeare family. But inside it is plain and roughly finished,—a house that would seem to us utterly lacking in comfort.

In the room where the immortal dramatist was born, the poet Wordsworth once tried to make some verses. The rough draft of them has been preserved with great care, and is framed under glass. I made a copy of the screed. First, were the three following lines :—

“The house of Shakespeare’s birth we here may see ;
That of his death we find without a trace.
Vain the inquiry, for, immortal, he ”—

Here came a pause. Evidently this beginning was not satisfactory to the poet, for he drew his pen through it to cross it out ; and then, taking a fresh start, proceeded thus :—

“Of mighty Shakespeare’s birth the room we see ;
That where he died, in vain to find we try.
Useless the search, for all immortal he,
And those who are immortal never die.”

In this room, too, Sir Walter Scott had inscribed his name on a pane of glass. Here was the cast of the great dramatist’s face, taken after his death, and here was a portrait of him, taken when he was

between thirty-eight and forty, — such a handsome man ! The picture is poor enough, no doubt, as a work of art,— crude and faulty in execution ; but the artist had somehow managed to prison something of the wonderful soul of his subject. The brow is the kingliest ever known, and something strong and resolute, and yet very calm, looks out of those painted eyes. This portrait is kept under lock and key, every night, in an iron safe. It is much too valuable to be trusted without the greatest precautions.

Shakespeare's writing-desk was there, too, — a battered old affair, which in its first estate was a very humble and homely article of furniture ; but how it made one's heart beat to sit down before it, and think what words had been written there ! — words which must endure till this round world itself shall pass away.

Back of the house was Shakespeare's garden. There they try to keep growing the flowers to which he especially alludes in his plays. The woman who showed us round gathered me a late pansy "for thought"; a sprig of rosemary "for remembrance"; some rue, which is "herb o' grace for Sundays"; and then she found me a daisy.

The visitor's book inside was full of illustrious names. We glanced at some of them, and then went off, as no doubt all these other visitors had

done, to find the cottage of Anne Hathaway, Shakespeare's wife, whom people say he could n't have loved very much, because he only left her his second-best bed in his will ; but he must have loved her in the days when he went to woo her in that humblest of all humble cottages.

It was the poorest little place, — scarcely more than a cabin, — with thatched roof, the roughest walls, and inside rough stone floors, and jagged-looking beams overhead. Yet, somehow, it impressed me even more deeply than Shakespeare's own house had done. This may have been partly because the other was full of visitors, while here at the Hathaway cottage there were only ourselves and the gentle old woman who showed us round. She pointed to an old settle, made of rough wood, in the first-floor room, and said : —

“ That 's the old courting-settle where *he* used to sit when he came to see his sweetheart.”

I sat down on it, and my heart beat strangely fast. I fancied that superb face I had seen in the portrait, only much younger, and all softened with tenderness ; and I thought I could imagine what a voice it was which used to say sweet things here in the long winter evenings.

We went up stairs to see the one luxury which the house contained, — a great carven, four-post bedstead, on which Shakespeare is believed to have

slept when he was first married. It is a stately old affair, which the little loft of a chamber seems hardly large enough to contain. The sheets and pillow-cases are of exquisite linen, which our guide took care to inform us were hand-made ; and they were trimmed with wonderful old English point-lace, hand-made, too.

When we went down stairs again, we lingered for some time over the visitors' book. Almost every great man in England had written there ; and yet it seemed to me that three quarters of the names were American. Pilgrims had been there from California, from Oregon, from Colorado. I doubt if there is a State in the Union which had not sent its delegate. Near the name of Charles Dickens was that of Professor Longfellow and family. Mark Twain and wife had been here too, and Charles D. Warner, and many another of our American men of letters. Here was Thackeray's signature, and that of Birket Foster, and Baroness Burdett-Coutts ; and who, if you please to conclude with royalty, but Queen Emma of the Sandwich Islands ?

Our last visit in Stratford was to the quiet old church where Shakespeare and his wife and his children were buried. There, after his "life's fitful fever, he sleeps well." It is a fine old church, as most of the English country churches are ; and not the Poets' Corner, in Westminster Abbey, where sleep

so many of the illustrious, is so interesting to me as this rustic church, where rests the mightiest dead of all. The situation is very beautiful. We rowed up the Avon, almost to the churchyard. There are great trees about it ; and the sweet summer stillness was broken by no sound save the hum of insects and the chirp of an occasional bird.

Our next day's excursion was to Kenilworth Castle, which is one of the most beautiful ruins in England, gray, ivy-grown, and possessed with a brooding spirit of desolation. The great banqueting hall, where brave men and beautiful women used to laugh and jest, has fallen into decay. The walls are broken, the roof now is the blue dome of heaven. One cannot help wondering whether the dumb old walls must not retain some memories of all the youth and beauty that filled them so proudly once.

To go next day to Warwick Castle was a very different affair. Warwick Castle is one of the best-preserved places in England. The grounds are something we can hardly imagine for extent and beauty. An English landscape is very different from an American one. It is much more highly finished, and much more luxurious. The grass is thicker and softer and greener, and the most noticeable difference of all is in the trees. The boughs of the English trees grow closer to the ground : the whole tree

seems larger, fuller, better nurtured. Anything more perfect than the scenery around Warwick Castle it would be impossible to imagine. The Avon flows by the grounds ; and we left our carriage a mile or two away, and were rowed by a stalwart English boatman along the beautiful river, between the wealth of green on either side, and up to the very entrance of the park.

The castle itself is a superb old pile, in perfect repair. It is the frequent residence of the Earl of Warwick ; indeed, the countess and her little children were there at the time we made our visit. The entrance hall is an immense apartment. It is like a great hall of assembly, rather than a private room. It is hung with pictures and with armor. In one corner is a grand bronze statue of an armed knight, riding forever on a great bronze horse. The horse himself is armed *cap-à-pie*, and the rider is covered with the heavy yet elegant armor of the old knight. It is said to be the armor of Guy of Warwick, the founder of the house. They say Guy was a giant, and he must have been if he wore that armor and was fitted by it ; for I have seen no mortal man of our own time who could have filled it. On one side of the hall was a vast fireplace, which looked as if it would require a cord of wood at a time. Near by it stood a carved affair, in size and shape like a great bedstead, superbly fashioned out

of the same heavy, sombre black oak which lined the hall. This bedstead-looking arrangement was heaped with great logs of wood, awaiting, I suppose, the first chill evening. It must be a splendid sight to see those logs blazing, and the firelight dancing on the old pictures, and the armor, and the quaint carving of the walls.

Men in livery had admitted us, but we were received in the hall by the traditional story-book-housekeeper of the English nobleman. She was a portly, well-fed-looking person, and wore a heavy black silk, that rustled as she walked. Her dignity lacked nothing, not even the bunch of keys at her side. A party of guests were assembled before us in the hall, for this was one of the days when the castle is understood to be on view.

She led us, in a procession which she majestically headed, through all the rooms on the lower floor. She informed us, in a sort of solemn whisper, that the countess was up stairs ; but I believe the up-stairs rooms are never shown.

Of all the apartments, I liked best the great old hall, though some of the others were superb. There were magnificent drawing-rooms, rich in hangings of tapestry, and inlaid cabinets, and articles of *vertu*. There was a library where I should have liked to dream away a century or two ; and there was a picture-gallery, where, amid much that was of no

especial interest, there were many of those immortal pictures which only a Roman Catholic church, a crowned head, or an English nobleman, can afford to own.

Our stately guide told us the name and the painter of each picture as she paused before it ; but she spoke in such a sing-song way, and, withal, so rapidly, that I should seldom have known what she said, if my study of pictures elsewhere had not made me familiar with the styles of many of the old painters who chiefly were represented there.

She seemed such a stately dame, this silk-clad housekeeper, that my own impulse would have been to pay her in thanks only, and bestow my gratuity on the man who opened the door. But I saw one and another dropping silver pieces into her hand ; and she put out that hand, covered with its black lace mitten, in a manner so alert, though still stately, as to convince me that the silver pieces were the kind of thanks she expected ; whereupon I timidly crossed her palm like the rest.

After we left the castle, we wandered for some time about the grounds, drinking in the deep charm of their rich and quiet beauty. Suddenly my companion exclaimed, “ There is the countess ! ” and I looked up and saw at an upper window a fair and gracious-looking lady, with her two little children leaning against her knees, looking down, with an

idle, yet not uninterested curiosity, at the strangers within her gates. That mother, as lovely as the English beauties whom Lely and Gainsborough used to paint, with those fair-haired, bright-eyed children leaning against her, seemed to me the bonniest sight I had seen in Warwick Castle.

XV.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY is the history of England made visible. All the kings and queens since Harold have been crowned there, and many of them are buried there. It is the tomb, moreover, of the most eminent statesmen, churchmen, poets, and novelists, for five hundred years.

The first king crowned there was Harold the Dauntless, in 1066. William the Conqueror was elected King at the Abbey. It was originally part of a royal palace, and held, as property, ninety-seven towns and villages, seventeen hamlets, and two hundred and sixteen manors.

It fed hundreds of poor daily. It comprised, beside the church which yet remains, many churches, towers, chapels, prisons, and other buildings, covering an immense area of ground. The present building illustrates nearly every period and variety of Gothic architecture.

The Abbey originally stood upon an island in the middle of a marsh,—Thorny Island by name,—

and it was built and dedicated to St. Peter, by Melutus, Bishop of the East Saxons. In truth, however, little is *known* of the foundation of the Abbey beyond the fact that it was among the earliest works of the first Christian converts in Britain.

King Edgar gave it to twelve Benedictine monks, and thenceforward its history becomes that of England. Its abbot had a seat among the peers in Parliament until the Reformation. It is now in the hands of a Dean and Chapter of Canons, like a cathedral, which, however, it is not, and never has been, except during the reigns of Henry VIII. and Edward VI.

It is not generally understood, perhaps, that the one only thing that constitutes a church a cathedral is the presence in it of a bishop's throne. Let but the bishop's chair be set up in the smallest wayside church, and it becomes a cathedral while so occupied ; and the grandest church in the world is no cathedral without its throne.

For grandeur of architecture, for beauty of stained glass, for the perfection of detail, the Abbey must be the admiration of all tourists ; but its greatest interest attaches to it as a place of sepulture of so illustrious a congregation of the dead.

As you approach it from Parliament Street, you perceive first the richly-adorned buttresses of

Henry VII.'s chapel. Then you emerge into the open square, and have the whole grand building rising before you. The little Church of St. Margaret stands in front of the Abbey, under its walls as it were, picturesquely breaking its outline, and displaying, by contrast, the lofty proportions of the great edifice behind it.

The House of Peers used, on high days and holidays, to attend service in the Abbey, while the Commons went to the little St. Margaret. The Chapter House of the Abbey was the original House of Commons. Westminster Hall and the present Houses of Parliament now front it on the left. The architecture of both the Abbey and the Houses of Parliament strongly reminds one of that of Milan Cathedral; though the Italian cathedral is of gleaming marble, and the English edifices are of gray stone.

Like most of the finest Gothic churches on the continent, Westminster Abbey is built in the form of a cross; the body of the cross extending from the west entrance, through nave and choir, to the high altar, with its glorious east window; and the north and south transepts forming its arms.

Visitors usually enter by the door near the Poets' Corner; and one could scarcely fail to pause there for a while, with beating heart, before going farther. Chaucer, the Father of English Poetry, was buried

there ; and there, from time to time, the glorious company of his followers have been borne to join him.

Here we have Drayton's monument, and Spenser's, and Cowley's, and Dryden's, and "rare Ben Jonson's," and Butler's, who wrote "Hudibras," and Gray, of "Gray's Elegy." Many forgotten poets are here, too. Here is an inscription to Thomas Shadwell, who was poet-laureate in the time of William III., but whose laurels withered ages ago, and have been blown away by the winds of time.

Nor does anybody read Matthew Prior now-a-days, though the men of his own day held him in high esteem. But here is Campbell, whom we are still grateful enough to remember ; and here are monuments to Shakespeare, and Milton, and Goldsmith, and Wordsworth, all of whose bodies repose elsewhere. Byron was to have been buried here, but the Dean and Chapter disapproved of him, and refused to admit him.

Not far off from the poets sleep Addison, and Sir Isaac Newton, and Dickens, and Thackeray, and Macaulay, and Dr. Samuel Johnson, whose monument, however, is in St. Paul's. Livingstone, the African explorer, is buried here, and Handel, the composer, and Pitt and Fox, who rest quietly enough, all their stormy debates over.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the dramatist, and

Garrick, the actor, are neighbors. Mrs. Siddons, queen of tragedy, has played out her *rôle*, and rests here at last. Mrs. Oldfield, another distinguished actress, was buried here, as the chronicles of the time tell us, "in a very fine Brussels lace head-dress, a Holland shift, with a tucker and double ruffles of the same lace, a pair of new kid gloves, and a winding-sheet."

You may wander at your will among these monuments in the nave and the transepts, but on all days except Monday you pay a small fee to see the chapels surrounding the choir, and are shown over them by a verger.

This arrangement is the one disagreeable feature of a visit to Westminster Abbey. You would fain spend hours in the solemn stillness of these wonderful chapels where lie buried kings and queens, and lords and ladies; but instead, you are hurried along with a score or two of discontented people, herded together like a flock of sheep, while the guide shouts, in a high-pitched, monotonous voice, "This is the monument of" King This or Queen That.

You cannot pause to collect your thoughts or your historical recollections; you have scarcely time to contemplate anything, and you get only the vaguest general idea as you are driven unhappily along.

It is a strange thought to a Republican that he is treading above the dust of kings and queens, whose “sceptre and crown have tumbled down,” as old Shirley sang, long ago. Thirteen kings lie at rest in the Abbey; and fourteen queens, who were once reigning sovereigns, or the wives of kings. Queen Elizabeth is here, and her fair rival and victim, Mary, Queen of Scots, and “good Queen Anne,” and “bloody Queen Mary,” and that brave Queen Eleanor who followed her husband, Edward I., to the Wars of the Crusades, and sucked the poison from his wound with her own bright lips,—that beautiful Queen Eleanor whom her husband so loved and mourned that he enacted that every Abbot of Westminster should be bound by oath, on entering on his office, to see that a hundred wax tapers were burning round her tomb on St. Andrew’s Eve, the anniversary of her death.

In these chapels, too, beside their royal occupants, are buried noble dukes, and earls, and barons, and their wives.

Most of these stately dead are represented by their effigies. There are kings and queens with their crowns; earls and countesses with their coronets; ladies, in robes of state, and knights in armor.

Usually, you will either see the good knight kneeling before his own tomb, with his lady kneeling at his heels, and behind her their children in regular

order, from the greatest to the least ; or else you will see the lord and lady lying on the tomb, the husband usually elevated a foot above his wife. It seems to have been a grand object with the makers of these old tombs to symbolize everywhere the sovereignty of the man over the woman.

One of the most extraordinary monuments is that to Lady Elizabeth Nightingale, popularly known as "Death and the Lady." The wife is dying in a very uncomfortable position, half-upheld by her husband's arm, while the skeleton figure of Death has burst forth from the iron door of the tomb below, and is aiming a dart at the lady, from which the husband tries in vain to shield her.

It seems that this grim Death has a terror for evil-doers ; for it is told among the traditions of the Abbey that a robber, coming in by moonlight, caught a glimpse of it, and was so affrighted that he fled away, leaving his crowbar behind him.

Of the chapels, which are nine in number, the largest and most beautiful is that of Henry VII. It occupies that part of the church usually called the Lady Chapel, and you ascend to it from the east end of the Abbey by a flight of stone steps. It is the burial-place of almost all the English sovereigns from Henry VII. to George II.

It is also the chapel of the Knights of the Bath, and is hung with their banners. It has two rows of

stalls, one for the knights, and one, lower down, for their esquires. The seats for the esquires are called *misereres*, because it was such a misery to sit upon them. They were so narrow that the unfortunate occupants could only keep their seats by diligently clinging to the sides, so that if an unhappy esquire fell asleep, he was sure to tumble down upon his nose.

This chapel is the finest specimen in all England of what is called the perpendicular style of architecture. Leland calls it “the miracle of the world.” It is built on the plan of a church, in itself, with a nave and side-aisles. The very walls are wrought into ornament, and there is no inch of it but is a separate beauty.

In this chapel are the tombs of Queen Elizabeth and of Mary, Queen of Scots. I wonder if they hate each other still down there. The glorious tomb of Henry VII. and his wife, Elizabeth of York, occupies the centre of the chapel.

Henry VII. was a loving husband, as was also George II., who desired that his dust might mingle with that of his beloved wife, in accordance with which wish, one side of each of their coffins was withdrawn, and they rest together.

In the midst of the royal dead reposes George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, the handsome and beloved favorite of James I. His effigy lies in state

upon his lofty tomb, and beside him reposes his faithful wife, who had much to forgive in him, but who loved him much, despite his neglects.

The chapel of Edward the Confessor contains the coronation chairs, which have been used at the crowning of so many kings and queens.

The most ancient of these chairs encloses the old coronation stone of Scotland, the loss of which grieved Scottish hearts sorely when it was carried away to London by Edward I. Tradition says this was the stone which pillow'd Jacob's head on that wonderful night when he saw in his vision the angels of God ascending and descending.

I have space for but the merest bird's-eye view of this wonderful Abbey. But there are two things I cannot omit to mention,— the Jerusalem Chamber and the wax-works. The Jerusalem Chamber used to be the guest-chamber of the Abbot's House, and it derived its name from the tapestries representing the history of Jerusalem, with which the walls were hung. It was here that Henry IV. died of apoplexy, in 1413.

It had been prophesied of him that he should die in Jerusalem, so he was not alarmed when the pains of death took him in this room. But suddenly he bethought himself to inquire the name of the chamber, and when the attendants had informed him, he praised God with a loud voice, and composed him-

self to die, as had been prophesied of him, in Jerusalem.

The wax-works have not been publicly exhibited since 1839, and can only be seen by a special order from the Dean. They are very interesting, for they are the veritable images of those whom they represent, attired as in life. That of Queen Elizabeth is a restoration of the original effigy, borne with her, as the custom then was, at her funeral. She is crowned with a diadem, and wears the huge ruff she brought into fashion. She has a velvet robe embroidered with gold, and a stomacher covered with jewels. There are eleven of these wax-works, kings and queens, brave still in their ancient though tarnished glory.

XVI.

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

ST. PAUL'S looks like a heathen temple, and it actually is the present representative—the great granddaughter, so to say—of a temple to Diana of the Ephesians once occupying the same spot, in the old days when the Romans had brought their pagan worship to Great Britain.

In this spot the pagan temple was succeeded by the first St. Paul's, which was burned down in Stephen's reign. Then arose one of the grandest and most famous of the world's churches—old St. Paul's—a great, glorious Gothic cathedral, with a towering spire, worthy of the greatest city in the world.

But it must have been a very unchurchly church, even then. Every reader of the old dramatists knows that the middle aisle was called Paul's Walk; and to what strange uses it was put may be inferred, not only from the old playwrights, but from an act of the Common Council of London in Queen Mary's reign, by which loyal subjects were forbidden to

carry through the cathedral beer-casks, or baskets of bread, fish, flesh, or fruit. They were also forbidden to lead through it mules or horses.

Elizabeth, in her turn, forbade duelling, sword-drawing, or shooting with guns there, and made agreements to pay money there illegal. For the church was thronged, in those days, by business men, who turned it into an exchange, and by lawyers, who met their clients there, each selecting a particular pillar which he used as an office.

Advertisements of all sorts covered the walls ; the worst kind of servants came there to be hired ; and even cheats, thieves, and assassins made it their meeting-place.

Bishop Earle describes the noise of this motley crowd "as that of bees—a strange hum, mixed of walking tongues and feet—a kind of still roar, or loud whisper." Another bishop, Bishop Corbet, speaks of

"The walk

Where all our British sinners swear and talk,
Old hardy ruffians, bankrupts, soothsayers,
And youths whose cozenage is as old as theirs."

Lotteries were drawn at the west door ; and altogether the great cathedral of London seems to have been a place which honest men and women would have taken care to avoid.

One of the oddest facts in its story is that this ex-

temple of Diana, with all its shame and all its glory, was very nearly purchased of Cromwell for a synagogue by the London Jews.

Everybody knows what was the end of old St. Paul's, the largest church that England ever held. In the great fire of 1666, the fierce flames got hold of it, and worked their will, swept it away, root and branch, with all its shame and all its glory, driving away the money-changers, and destroying their temple.

After the fire arose the present edifice, a great, gray mass, imposing enough in its way, but wanting all the poetic charm and stately beauty of its predecessor. The first stone was laid by the architect, Sir Christopher Wren, in 1675. His tomb was the first to be erected in the church he had designed, and it is still to be seen there, with the famous epitaph, "*Si monumentum quæris, circumspice*" (If you seek a monument, look round).

The opening sermon was preached December 2, 1697, on the text, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord," so that now, in 1881, new St. Paul's is but one hundred and eighty-four years old; and it was not finished, by the erection of the gilt cross on the cupola, till 1710. The cost of the building was nearly four million dollars, raised chiefly by duties on coals.

For a long time the only tomb in the church was that of its architect, Wren.

The next to be admitted to the honor of sepulture there was Howard, the philanthropist. His biographers say he was a cantankerous sort of fellow at home, in spite of his philanthropy ; and his face looks cross enough in his marble portrait statue.

The third tomb in St. Paul's was that of the great painter, Sir Joshua Reynolds ; and then came the scholar, Sir William Jones.

Since then St. Paul's has become the mausoleum of great soldiers and sailors, as Westminster Abbey is the grander tomb of poets and statesmen. Nelson's tomb is here, with a monument by Flaxman ; and in 1878 was erected, after years of delay, the massive tomb of the Duke of Wellington, surmounted by huge allegorical groups in bronze, and with the names of his victories surrounding its base.

I had heard this tomb praised by some of the best judges in London, who had seen the separate groups in advance ; but it greatly disappointed me as a whole. It cannot be seen to advantage where it stands ; it has an effect cumbrous rather than imposing ; and when one considers at what great outlay of time and money it was erected, one cannot help feeling that the Iron Duke has hardly got his deserts in bronze.

For some unknown reason, painters have shared this mausoleum of the soldiers and sailors, instead

of finding what would have seemed a more fitting home, with the poets and musicians, in Westminster. Besides Sir Joshua are West, Lawrence, Barry, Opie, Fuseli, and others ; but, above all, Turner. He had asked on his death-bed to be buried as near to Reynolds as possible ; and his wish was fulfilled.

As a whole, the monuments in St. Paul's are remarkable chiefly for their subjects, though some few have merit of their own. They are all large, and possess a certain suitability to the great barn-like interior where they stand, — a vast expanse roofed by the mighty dome, which seems quite as far off as the heavy London sky, outside, — an expanse softened by no dim, religious light, and unbroken by any sort of shadow or mystery.

It is no wonder that most people are tempted to betake themselves to such more secluded portions as the Whispering Gallery and the Lantern, which last commands a panorama of twenty miles.

The dome of St. Paul's was painted by Sir James Thornhill, the father-in-law of Hogarth.

One day, while he was at his work, a gentleman was with him on the immensely high scaffolding, which was not railed. Sir James had just finished the head of an apostle, and was stepping backward to observe the effect, when suddenly his friend snatched up a brush, and smeared the just-painted face. Sir James rushed forward again, crying out :

"Bless my soul ! What have you done ?"

"Only saved your life," was the tranquil reply ; for one more backward step would have precipitated the painter over the edge of the scaffolding to the stone floor below,—three hundred feet of fall.

The history of a church that dates back less than two hundred years must needs be meagre in detail. St. Paul's has witnessed only two marriages in the last one hundred and fifty years,—the most recent being that of the Lord Mayor's daughter of 1877.

It boasts of no coronation, like its sister of Westminster. It has but slight wealth of association, though its solemn bell (the fourth largest in England) must have melancholy memories,—since it never gives forth a sound save when it is tolled on the occasion of the death of some member of the royal family, the Bishop or Lord Mayor of London, or the Dean of the Cathedral.

St. Paul's has had scant share in the history of England, though in the civil wars the east end was walled in for a meeting-house, the choir was made a barrack for cavalry, and the portico let out in lodgings.

The prettiest ceremony that ever goes on there at present is the anniversary meeting of all the charity schools, held on the first Thursday in every June. Fancy eight thousand children, in their queer, old-

world costumes, each school with a dress of its own,—boys in strange caps and gowns and knee-breeches, little girls in quaint mob-caps and neckerchiefs.

It is something spirit-stirring to see them all stand up, like rows of bright, homely flowers in an old-fashioned garden, and hear them sing the Old Hundredth Psalm together. William Blake, the painter poet, wrote one of his quaint poems about this scene :—

“ ‘T was on a Holy Thursday,
Their innocent faces clean,
Came children, walking two and two,
In red and blue and green ;
Gray-headed beadles walked before,
With wands as white as snow,
Till to the high dome of St. Paul’s
They like Thames’ waters flow.

• • • • •
“ Now like a mighty wind they raise
To Heaven the voice of song,
Or like harmonious thunderings
The courts of Heaven among ;
Beneath them sit the aged men,
Wise guardians of the poor.
Then cherish pity, lest you drive
An angel from your door.”

But it takes an occasion like this yearly blossoming of the children to make St. Paul’s look anything but grand, gloomy, and empty.

XVII.

EDINBURGH AND THE HOME OF SIR
WALTER SCOTT.

IT is a long trip from London to Edinburgh, but if you take the Flying Scotchman, you do it in ten hours. The Flying Scotchman is the fast express, which makes only three or four stops between the two cities, and goes, I believe, at the rate of sixty miles an hour. It does, indeed, seem like flying. A bird on rapid wing must get much such glimpses of the world about him as we got, tearing on through the country, that long day.

We reached Edinburgh in the evening. The friend we were to visit was glad of this; for he was an American of Scotch descent, and had enough of a Scotchman's pride in Edinburgh to want us first to see "The Castle" in all its morning glory. Everybody talks of the Castle when you are in Edinburgh. You cannot forget it if you would, for it dominates everything, and it is the heart of everything.

Edinburgh is a city of hills and valleys. Castle Rock, as the site of the Castle is called, is some

seven hundred feet in circumference, and on three sides it is just bare rock, so precipitous that foot of man could hardly scale it. Accessible only on one side, a place more perfectly adapted for a fortress can scarcely be imagined.

The old gray Castle itself is one of the most impressive of buildings. Whether you see it at sunrise, at high noon, in the tender twilight time, or when the pale moon visits it, it is alike beautiful; but I think the view of it which will linger longest in my memory is that I had one afternoon when I sat on a green bank in the Princes' Street Gardens and listened to the band of the Duchess of Sutherland's Own, as a favorite regiment of Highlanders is called. The sun sank lower and lower as the band discoursed its sweet, shrill music, until at last the valley was in shadow, while all the sunset glow and glory rested on the gray old Castle, making its windows flame like opals.

I remember Edinburgh and the region round it in a series of pictures. The buildings are all of stone,—a fine-grained sandstone, which is quite equal in beauty to marble. It is susceptible of the utmost delicacy of carving, and it so well resists the effects of time and the weather as to retain longer than almost any other stone its freshness of aspect.

Arthur's Seat attracted me most among the many hills. The Queen climbed to the top of it in a

former visit ; and if *she* could, why not we ? So we left our carriage at the base of the hill, and struggled on and up.

The Seat itself is a great rock at the very top of the hill, in which you can trace a sort of fantastic resemblance to a chair.

I sat there on the jagged old rock, and looked forth with such a swelling at my heart as I cannot at all put into words. I have seldom if ever seen a view at once so extended and so lovely.

Edinburgh lay spread out there in all its stately beauty. Other more distant hills confronted you with their solemn peace. Off at one side was Leith, the seaport of Edinburgh, and beyond it the sea, blue, bright, illimitable. It was worth a much harder climb to look upon such a scene.

I suppose no pilgrim would go to Edinburgh without extending his pilgrimage to Abbotsford, and Dryburgh, and Melrose Abbey.

The house where Scott was born has been pointed out to you in Edinburgh. You have seen his monument there, in the Princes' Street Gardens, where he is raised on a pedestal of triumph, surrounded by scenes and characters from his works. But these are nothing to compare in interest to the house he himself built, and in which he passed the last and most brilliant years of his life.

We went from Edinburgh by train, stopped at

Melrose Station, and then drove to Abbotsford. One wonders very much at the great novelist's choice of a site for his noble and stately mansion.

It is by no means a commanding, or even a picturesque spot; but to Sir Walter, who was a passionate antiquary, the grounds were interesting as being a reputed haunt of Thomas the Rhymer, and containing various Caledonian antiquities. To other people the place must have seemed tame, and bleak, and uninviting enough, until Sir Walter set his splendid house there, and made it one of the shrines of the world, for all English-speaking pilgrims of the future.

It has been called "a romance in stone and lime," this gray mansion, with its strange combinations of various styles of architecture, its lofty arched gateway, its towers, its projecting windows and hanging turrets, its bold gables, and its numerous and sometimes fantastic decorations.

The entrance-hall is a magnificent apartment, about forty feet in length. Its floor is a mosaic of black and white marble from the Hebrides; its walls are panelled with richly-carved oak, and tastefully hung with ancient armor.

The dining-room has a wonderful black oak roof, and a fine collection of pictures. It is the apartment in which Sir Walter died. The drawing-room is cased with cedar, and furnished with beautiful antique chairs of ebony, presented to Sir Walter by his sovereign, King George IV.

The most interesting room of all is the library. It is the largest of all the rooms, measuring fifty feet by sixty. Its roof is of richly carved oak, modelled after Roslin and Melrose. Its books number at least twenty thousand volumes, many of them extremely rare and valuable. They are placed in carved oaken cases, under lock and key.

How we did long to turn over some of their leaves ! but it was of no use. Among the adornments of the room are Chantrey's bust of Scott, a copy of the Stratford bust of Shakespeare, a silver urn presented by Lord Byron, an ebony writing-desk, the gift of a royal George, and two beautifully-carved armchairs, sent to Sir Walter by the Pope.

The tall Scotchman who conducted us about told us that not one thing in the library had been changed since Sir Walter left it. We felt that it was a time to be very enthusiastic ; but how could we, when there were, perhaps, twenty visitors in all, crowding, and trying to look over each others' heads, and the "braw Hielandmon," in the midst of us, was shouting out his information at the top of his strained, high-pitched, monotonous voice ?

There was much more room for emotion at Dryburgh Abbey, whither we drove immediately on leaving Abbotsford. At Dryburgh Abbey, Sir Walter is buried ; and I think there could be no lovelier resting-place in all this world.

At Dryburgh, our little party of three was quite alone. No guide persecuted us. We left our carriage, and crossed the little foot-bridge over the Tweed, and then walked through the long, leafy lanes to the old abbey.

Oh, what a beautiful old place it is! The portions of the abbey which remain are of the rarest architectural perfection. There is a wonderful rose window, round which the ivy has grown till the window seems framed in the green leafage. St. Mary's Aisle, where is the tomb of Sir Walter, is the most perfect portion remaining. But it seemed to me that the abbey in its prime must have been far less interesting than in its picturesque and pathetic decay.

Melrose Abbey was much more perfect, but for me had less of charm. Dryburgh is remote from all the stir of life, in a sylvan solitude. Melrose is in a rubbishing little town, near a rattling noisy railway station, and commonplace houses crowd thickly around it. It is, however, a vision of architectural beauty. Do you remember how Sir Walter wrote of it in "The Lay of the Last Minstrel"?

"If you would view fair Melrose right,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight ;
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild but to flout the ruins gray.
When the broken arches are black in night,
And each shafted oriel glimmers white ;

When the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruined central tower ;
When buttress and buttress, alternately,
Seem framed of ebon and ivory,
When silver edges the imagery,
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die ;
When the distant Tweed is heard to rave,
And the owlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,
Then go, — but go alone the while, —
Then view St. David's ruined pile ;
And home returning, soothly swear
Was never scene so sad and fair."

No doubt Sir Walter was right, and beautiful Melrose is far more impressive when the sounds of surrounding life are still, and the moon shadows and softens surrounding objects ; but by daylight, and even in its decay, it is a most exquisite specimen of Gothic architecture in its noblest and best conception.

Time fails me to tell you how many other things came into our Scottish week, — a visit to dear, lovely old Dr. John Brown, who wrote "Rab and his Friends" and "Marjorie Fleming," and had pictures of good Americans in his photograph book, and seemed to know all about us, as well as if he had lived among us, — a Sunday at quiet Roslin, — visits to pictures and statues, — so many pleasures that, when at last the Flying Scotchman tore back with us to London, we felt a great homesickness for the fair Scottish town we left behind.

XVIII.

BRIGHTON AND BATHING.

I WENT to Brighton in October, when the season was at its height.

Brighton is, perhaps, the most celebrated and fashionable of English watering-places. To me it was unequivocally a disappointment. I had heard it called "London by the sea," yet I had no idea it could be neighbor to the waves and yet so utterly citified, so hopelessly artificial.

I thought there would be, somewhere, lonely bits of shingle, where you could get down to the water's edge and watch the waves, — the resolute, on-marching, ever-returning, patient waves. But solitude exists nowhere in Brighton.

It is a busy, flourishing, gay town, built down to the edge of the sea, flaunting its shop-signs in the teeth of the breakers. I *say* the breakers, because I am told they abound there; that when the wind blows a certain way the waves are gigantic.

When I was there the sea was level as a mill-

pond, and looked as civilized as did everything else. Whatever you find in London you can find also in Brighton, except cheap lodgings. The best London photographers have also *ateliers* there. Dry-goods shops, china warehouses, even agencies for brewers, extend themselves from London to Brighton, and put out familiar signs.

There must have been a time before Brighton was Brighton, before it had out-Londoned London. The Saxons used to call it Brighthelmstone. In those old days I can fancy it a lovely solitude, with the sea bright, and the sea-gulls white, in the morning sunshine.

Even seventy years ago it had a population of less than 8,000, while now its resident population is 70,000, which increases in full season to 90,000.

About the year 1782 it had the misfortune to become fashionable. George IV. loved it; and many a royal scandal is connected with it.

The Grand Parade — that is to say, a street which leads along the sea, and has shops and residences on the inland side of it — is the great resort. There of a fine afternoon you see much the same class of people you have met in June driving in Hyde Park. You see the same noble horses, and heavy, handsome carriages, and self-satisfied coachmen and footmen in showy liveries. There you see bright-faced English girls, and poodle-dogs, and donkeys “all

saddled and bridled, and fit for the fight," waiting patiently for riders.

On the sidewalks you meet numberless Bath-chairs, from which the pathetic faces of invalids look forth at you. Also there are long piers running out into the shining sea, on which you enter by paying toll of twopence at a little gate.

You can find plenty of amusement on the piers, if you are not too fastidious. There the band plays morning and evening ; there are shops full of all sorts of small temptations ; there is a conjurer ; there is a man with a trained dog, who will tell you the time of day, the number of your watch, all but your destiny.

If you want to find out all about yourself that the dog doesn't know, you must go to the fortuneteller's booth, a little tent, where a small walking-doll tells your disposition, whether your friends like you, whether you will ever marry ; in short, all the trifling particulars which the trained poodle has failed to mention.

This fine-lady automaton hands you printed squares of paper. You ask, for instance, "What is my character ?" and are answered thus :—

Rather hasty,
but very
sincere;
good taste ;
domestic
habits.

Or, “Shall I ever be rich ?” and are told,—

Great wealth
for you
through
marriage.

A great deal of bathing goes on in Brighton, though less than at other places where the fashionable season comes earlier in the year.

English bathing is something altogether different from French or American ; it is the very triumph of discomfort and inconvenience, the most unpleasant pleasure that can ever have been devised.

At every English seaside place there are two sets of rough wooden boxes on wheels,—bathing-machines they are called,—one set for ladies and children, and the other for gentlemen.

These machines seem to be studiously so contrived as to be as unendurable as possible. You approach them in a spirit of martyrdom, and pay from a sixpence to a shilling — it is a shilling at Brighton — for the use of the machine, including a bathing-dress. Each little box has a small shelf, a peg or two, and a useless bit of looking-glass about as large as the palm of your hand. The floor is gritty with sand. The door of entrance at the landward end seldom closes, and that at the seaward end never, so that the wind blows straight through.

These machines are usually drawn into the water

by horses, though sometimes they are let down from a steep beach by a capstan.

“ Hold hard ! ” cries out the driver, as he is about to start the thing off ; and, indeed, you need to “ hold hard,” for unless you clung desperately to the seat, you would be thrown to the floor, as the machine has no springs, and jolts horribly, giving you a sensation like a donkey’s trot. You must sit on your bathing-dress, or that is pretty sure to get shaken into the sea.

When your box has been drawn well into the water, horse and driver take leave of you, and go in search of some other unfortunate ; but first the same voice that has bidden you to hold hard cries out “ Remember Jack ! ” which means that you are to give him a penny or two. You are always giving a penny or two in England. Your pockets ought to be lined with copper, like a steam-boiler, to get on here at all.

When Jack has departed, you put on your bathing-clothes. If they are the ordinary hired ones, they are sure to be very ugly. A sort of long blue flannel sacque, with no trousers, is the commonest style, though occasionally there is a queer union of waist and trousers, somewhat more comfortable than the other, but scarcely more sightly.

Having thus made a guy of yourself, you descend some steps into the water. In England, men and

women never bathe in company. Ladies are under the charge of a sort of amphibious animal, called a bathing-woman, who spends her whole time in the sea.

You find here none of the graceful picturesqueness of French bathing. It is the rarest thing in the world for an Englishwoman to be able to swim ; and there is nothing very charming in the sight of a line of figures clad in blue flannel night-gowns, and with oil-skin caps on their heads, clinging frantically to ropes, and bobbing and courtesying to a row of wooden boxes. The hours for this enchanting performance are from seven or eight in the morning till about noon.

Sometimes it happens that a bathing-machine is forgotten by the lad who should come on horseback to fetch it back. In vain the lady puts her towel out of a hole designed for that purpose at the landward end, which is the proper signal to say that she is in readiness.

“Jack” is bent on something else, and does not heed her flag of distress. She finds the rising tide caressing her feet, and gradually flooding her box, and soaking her apparel. She waits to be remembered, not patiently, but with her fears rising like the tide. However, Jack usually turns out better than the lover in the ballad, who rides away, and never comes again. Before it is quite too late, he

tears down the shingle, and again Venus rises from the sea, safe, though salt. Frights of this sort happen not altogether infrequently ; but I have never heard of any serious accident in connection with Jack's forgetfulness.

All English people hate this system of bathing. They all grumble at it, but no one tries to change it.

It is the same thing everywhere, even in the Channel Islands, which belong to Great Britain. The only variety is that the larger and more fashionable the watering-place, the greater the misery, and the less you get of space or convenience.

In striking contrast with the discomforts of real sea-bathing at Brighton is the comfort of sea-water baths taken in-doors.

There are two large establishments for this purpose, comprising every variety of bath, even a swimming-bath. The pleasantest and cheapest are the ordinary hot baths. For two shillings and sixpence, that is to say, sixty-two cents, you have a nice bathing-room, with a good tub, hot sea-water, a well-trained attendant, and an adjoining dressing-room, with handsome furniture, good mirrors, and a little grate, in which a fire burns cheerfully if the day is chilly.

You can procure every luxury in the world at Brighton except solitude. The sea never seems to

me the sea there. I have a curious feeling that it is as artificial and as well kept in order as the rest. Its very voice is modulated to a different cadence than when its billows break against the stormy coast of Cornwall or the white cliffs of Dover.

I should have liked to go down to the shore at midnight, when the houses and the shops and the people were asleep, and see if it would whisper me some of its old secrets. But if you want to see fashion, and luxury, and the pride of life, with sea-bathing for an excuse and an occupation, go to Brighton, and be happy.

XIX.

LORD MAYOR'S DAY IN LONDON.

BEING in London on the 9th of November, of course I went to see the show.

Every 9th of November all the mayors in England, Scotland, and Ireland enter upon their office. The Lord Mayor of London — by the way, only the mayors of London, Dublin, and York are called “*Lord Mayors*”— goes in procession from the Guildhall in London to Westminster Hall, there to present himself to the Barons of the Exchequer, who represent the Crown, and to take certain oaths of office.

This procession is popularly known as the “*Lord Mayor's Show*.” In ancient times—indeed, from time immemorial—the procession consisted of the military forces of the city, such as the trained bands, the guilds of the various crafts and trades, with their banners and insignia, and all such persons of consequence as wished thus to demonstrate their friendship to the city. For you must know that, from old times, the city of London was a most inde-

pendent and highly-privileged body, very tenacious of its rights, and not seldom arraying itself against the Crown.

Long time ago, the Lord Mayors and their processions used to sweep grandly up to Westminster by water in gilded barges, superb as Cleopatra's.

In recent years the procession has, however, abandoned the picturesque pageantry of the river passage, and gone always by land ; but it is still an imposing show. The Lord Mayor's term of office is one year only, though he is often re-elected. Dick Whittington (of the cat story) was four times Lord Mayor. During his mayoralty the Lord Mayor gives up his own home, wherever that may be, and resides in "the Mansion House," an imposing and stately abode in the city.

He is almost always a tradesman, as bankers and the very great merchants will seldom condescend to take the office. It is an expensive honor to whom-ever assumes it, since no salary attaches to it, and but a very insufficient allowance is given by the city for the grand hospitalities which are one of the burdens of the position.

The aristocracy and gentry laugh at the "show," as a relic of picturesque barbarism ; but notwithstanding this, it becomes every year more and more a pageant which the people love. The 9th of November rose in fog,—that cold, yellow November

fog of London, of which you have all heard, but which you can never quite imagine till you have experienced it. Later on, it settled into a teasing, melancholy rain, that, however, did not interrupt the procession, but was disheartening to the crowd.

I surveyed the scene from a window on the route. As the time approached for the procession to pass, you saw the crowd thicken.

They gathered from everywhere and nowhere. They seemed to start up out of the very pavement. Girls and women stood here and there on stools which they had brought with them, to escape from the horrible mud and wet of the London streets.

I saw one elderly matron, who had climbed on a ladder, followed by a troop of dirty children, swarming over this uncertain support. In the very centre of the street stood a young woman, of whom I longed to make a picture. It was a subject which would have suited Hogarth, or that wonderful Frenchman, Millet.

She was young, with a pale, sad face, of that half-grayish white that means poor food, and a life without hope or pleasure. She had with her a boy, seven years old, perhaps ; her own boy, evidently, for she kept her arms round him, and held her ragged shawl fast about him, and sheltered him from the rain with all her poor resources.

I don't think she herself cared much to see the

show, for her face was utterly hopeless, utterly unexpectant ; but she meant that the child should have his pleasure, and she stood her ground firmly.

The crowd rushed by her, round her, almost over her ; but still she stood for a long half-hour quite motionless. At last I looked away for a few moments, and when I looked back, she was gone, swept away on the black, surging tide of base humanity ; but by her face and all the piteous pathos of her attitude, I am haunted still.

A London crowd seems to me the most brutal I have ever seen. An Italian crowd is gentleness itself in comparison. A French crowd is as desperate and as dangerous, perhaps, but for simple brute force and boorishness, the London crowd is unmatched.

All along the route shop-windows were closed with heavy wooden shutters, as a protection against the mob ; and a friend of mine saw a gentleman who tried to make his way among them hustled off the sidewalk, and absolutely stripped of all but his shirt and trousers before he could escape.

Of course the police are out in full force, but their force is insufficient. It would take a standing army to keep such a mob in perfect order.

The city is never so gayly decorated as on Lord Mayor's Day. Overhead, the air is full of flags, balconies are bright with bunting, mottoes and

every possible device of decoration abound. It makes one think of an Italian city in carnival time. At last comes a burst of triumphal music: the procession is approaching.

By some sort of magic a path is cleared. The noble band of the Grenadier Guards leads the way, then other military bands, then the guilds of the different trades, with music playing and banners borne proudly.

To one of these guilds, or unions, everybody must belong who receives the freedom of the city of London. The late Prince Consort, for instance, was a fishmonger, and so, I believe, is the Prince of Wales.

Here are the haberdashers, the saddle-makers, and all the other makers of whom you can possibly think. Here are open carriages drawn by superb horses, in which sit the common councilmen in robes of state, black edged with sable, and aldermen in all the glory of their brilliant scarlet attire.

Here are mounted knights, in real armor, and here are foresters from Epping Forest, clad in Lincoln green, as Robin Hood may have been in his day. The coachmen wear white curled wigs, and are among the most conspicuous members of the procession.

Soon came a showy chariot, or car, drawn by six gray horses, ridden by postilions. In this car rested

horizontally, a model of Cleopatra's needle, round which were grouped white-robed figures trying to look like Egyptians. Then came a still larger car, quite worth looking at, for it was allegorical, and represented Peace and Plenty, and old Father Thames shaking hands with Mistress Britannia, and the Muses, and the Four Quarters of the Globe, and I know not what else. The robes of the Muses were dripping with rain; and Britannia looked very cross and uncomfortable; but never mind, there they all were.

Then more bands; more celebrated people; the outgoing Lord Mayor, preceded by state trumpeters; the mounted band of the Household Cavalry; the Lord Mayor's walking footmen, in their uniforms of dark crimson velvet embroidered with gold; the City Marshal on horseback; the City Trumpeters; finally, the new Lord Mayor.

This august functionary rides in a very old-fashioned state coach, gilt all over, in company with the Recorder (or Judge of the City Courts), the Sword-Bearer, and other officials. The sword projects out of one window, the mace out of the other, but the Lord Mayor himself does n't project out of window, but sits inside, on a back seat, and is, therefore, invisible. It is something to be drawn, once in a way, by such horses as are attached to this coach of state. There are six of them, all of the

smoothest, perfectest dark bays, with black manes and tails.

The rear of the processions was closed by an escort of the Eighth Hussars, who prevented that “ugly rush” of the crowd, which has sometimes, in other years, actually imperilled the coach of state.

The day closes with a grand banquet at Guild Hall, given by the Mayor. This year over eight hundred guests were received by the Lord and Lady Mayoress. Among them were dukes and earls, ministers of state, foreign ministers, judges, high officials of every sort, private gentlemen and ladies.

To have entertained, once in his life, a company so illustrious must be a distinction as dear to the heart of an Englishman as to his purse, and I presume the newly-elected Lord Mayor did not think he paid at all too much for it.

XX.

AN ENGLISH CHRISTMAS.

AN English Christmas is an American Christmas and something more. More ceremonies and superstitions are connected with it among certain orders of people than we in America know anything about, and its obligations in the way of feasting and giving of gifts are still more onerous than with us.

The really highest classes in English society are not to be found in London at Christmas time. They go to their family estates, and hold high holiday there. But there are plenty left of the good middle-class people — that is to say, professional men, artists, authors, and large merchants — to make London gay.

The true English Christmas which most charms one's fancy is the country Christmas, where great fires glow in old ancestral halls, and scores of dependents are made happy by Christmas cheer.

But there is feasting enough in London. You do not now, indeed, see such a bill of fare as history records in the old days. King Edward III. forbade

his subjects, by law, to have more than two courses at dinner on ordinary days, and only made exceptions in favor of certain great feasts, one of which was at Christmas.

Loyal subjects took advantage of these special epochs to satisfy all their arrears of hunger, it appears, since a writer of that time mentions the following bill of fare as that of a "frugal" dinner to a few friends :— "A shield of brawn with mustard ; a boiled capon ; a boiled piece of beef ; a chine of beef roasted ; a neat's tongue, roasted ; a pig, roasted ; a turkey, roasted ; chevets, baked ; a goose, roasted ; a swan, roasted ; a haunch of venison, roasted ; a pasty of venison ; a kid ; an olive pie ; a custard ; and as many salads, fricassees, knick-shaws, and pastries as will make up the whole number of dishes to thirty-two." Of course, Christmas plum-pudding and mince-pie were among the "knick-shaws and pastries."

A Christmas dinner under Queen Victoria is a much simpler affair. You will be sure still, however, of roast turkey and plum-pudding, and mince, or Christmas, pie.

With the eating of mince-pies there is connected a superstition which sounds like a pleasant device of hospitality. During "Christmas-time," — that is to say, from the 16th of December to the 6th of January, — you will find mince-pies part of the feast, in

whatever house you may be invited to dine, and the tradition is that the number of happy months you will pass in the following year will be as many as the mince-pies you taste at Christmas-tide in other people's houses.

Among the prettiest Christmas superstitions is one that is firmly believed still by the peasantry in many parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland,—that when the clock strikes twelve on Christmas Eve the dumb animals themselves celebrate the Nativity. The cock crows out "*Christus natus est*" (Christ is born); the ox bellows "*Ubi?*" (Where) and falls on his knees; the lamb bleats "*Bethlem*"; the ass brays "*Eamus*" (Let us go); and the bees hum the hundredth psalm.

In Germany the belief prevails that even the trees share the general rejoicing, and the peasants go out and salute them, saying, "Little tree, wake up! Dame Christmas is coming."

Trees figure largely, indeed, in Christmas superstitions. In remote rural districts in England, many people will be found who believe most solemnly that if one is bold enough to watch in a church-yard with an ash-stick in his hand, between the hours of eleven and twelve on Christmas Eve, he will see pass before him a weird procession of all those in the parish who are to die during the coming year.

The significance of the mistletoe-bough must be

well known. It is hung up in some doorway, or in the centre of the room, and any girl who is caught under it must submit to be kissed, under the dire penalty that if she refuses, she is sure not to be married for a year to come.

I saw mistletoe in every house I entered last Christmas-tide, and I even knew one precocious boy of ten who carried round a sprig of it in his pocket, and successively astonished all the ladies in the house by unexpectedly whipping out his bit of green, holding it over their heads, and kissing them.

Of course here in England, as all over the Christian world, it is the custom to give gifts to friends and dependents on Christmas Day. In England the Christmas dinner of many families is sent them by friends in the country, and railway vans fairly groan under the weight of turkeys and spare-ribs and game and all sorts of good things.

A friend of mine told me of an untoward accident, some four years ago, from which he was a sufferer, and by means of which a large part of London went dinnerless on Christmas Day.

A goods-train was coming on Christmas Eve from the West of England, laden with good things for the morrow's feast. The precious eatables were forwarded by the very last train that they might arrive as fresh as possible, but the friends for whom this feast of fat things was destined had been forewarned, and

awaited its reception with empty larders and great expectations.

Suddenly something on the over-loaded train caught fire, and the result was the speedy and unexpected roasting of all the Christmas provisions. Before the news could reach waiting households, all the provision-shops in London had been closed, not to open again till the morning after Christmas, and hundreds of families actually went without their Christmas dinners on account of this droll misadventure.

There is one system of Christmas giving in England against which every householder protests, but from which it seems impossible to escape,—the gifts of “Boxing Day.”

Boxing-Day is the day after Christmas; and on that evil day every knock on a door costs the owner of the knocker a sum varying from sixpence to half a crown or more, that is to say, from twelve cents to three-quarters of a dollar.

The dustmen, the postmen, the grocer’s man, the boy who brings the newspaper, the butcher’s man, the greengrocer’s man, the baker’s man, the very scavengers, and above all, the “waits,” who expect to be well paid for having made your nights hideous, all call. The “waits” are men who go round everywhere, for three weeks before Christmas, between midnight and three o’clock in the morning,

and wake everybody from peaceful slumbers by playing drunken-sounding tunes on a harp or fiddle and cornet, and then tranquilly present themselves on Boxing Day, expecting to be paid for this nuisance.

The principal wait claims his privileges under a regular appointment, having a silver badge and chain with the arms of the city. The waits and dustmen will often leave printed notices that they are going to call, warning houses against impostors, and announcing that no Christmas "box"—that is to say gift—is to be bestowed on any claimant who cannot produce some given token of his right to it.

Out of doors men of business suffer from similar extortions. Cabmen expect extra fares on Boxing-Day; and railway porters expect extra tips, and get them. Altogether, this supplementary Christmas is a heavy tax on household expenditure.

In former times the word "box" was literal. All the dependents and inferiors, whom custom entitled to expect gifts, had their boxes of wood, or else of earthenware, with a slit to receive the money,—not unlike a child's saving-bank. In those days people used sometimes to exchange unopened boxes, on the chance of winning or losing by the operation.

Boxing-Day is one of the four "bank-holidays" in London; that is, one of the four days when all banks

and public offices are closed by law, and shops and private offices follow the example. From time immemorial the Christmas pantomimes open on boxing-night ; and most of the theatres change their programmes.

It is a sort of social duty among the lower classes to go to some place of amusement on that night ; and in former times apprentices were allowed to go on that occasion to see Lillo's tragedy of "George Barnewell," which always used to be acted for their instruction, in order to show them what comes of keeping bad company and robbing the master's till.

Theatrical performances on boxing-night are usually noisy. Refined people keep away, and pit and gallery have it their own way. Christmas has always been a great date for new plays. It was the first night, in 1597, of "Love's Labor Lost."

To recur to Christmas boxes, I should tell you that they involve no sort of that "good will toward men" which we are taught should be the spirit of Christmas. Every one seems to regard them as a disagreeable tax, to be paid grudgingly, a sort of black-mail to secure one's self against neglect or reluctant service. If not given voluntarily, they are sure to be asked for ; for anything like pride or dignity of character seems to me utterly absent from the English of the lower orders.

It is no wonder that an unfortunate Frenchman,

trying to learn the language and customs of England, was sorely puzzled by the "Christmas box."

He consulted his faithful dictionary, and it seemed to him that box meant everything in England. It meant — 1, The seat of a coachman ; 2, a trunk ; 3, a country house ; 4, a bench in an eating-house ; 5, a fight with fists ; 6, to regard the points of the compass ; 7, a *loge* in a theatre ; 8, a sort of shrub, the French *buis* ; 9, a part of a screw ; 10, a sentry's hut ; 11, a blow on the ear.

This last meaning was fresh on his mind on the 26th of December, and when he was asked for a Christmas box he administered it accordingly. I think that most Englishmen would dearly love to follow his example.

XXI.

UNIVERSITY BOAT RACES.

It is a curious thing to see a whole country so astir about an event which has nothing to do with money or politics, as is all England, every year, about the University Boat Race. In our own country there is scarcely more excitement over an election than prevails in England concerning the race. Of course our election excitements are long-continued, and this boat-race madness is at its height but for a day, so far as the general public is concerned.

But what a day it is, that day! All England is either Oxford or Cambridge. Every lady wears either the dark blue of Oxford or the light blue of Cambridge; the dogs wear ribbons representing the sentiments of their owners; and the very donkeys of the costermongers are actually tricked out in the rival colors.

The first University Boat Race took place in the tenth year of the reign of King George IV. It was Cambridge who gave the first challenge.

At a meeting of the Cambridge University Boat Club, Mr. Snow, of St. John's College, Cambridge, was requested to write to Mr. Staniforth, of Christ Church, Oxford, and propose a University Rowing Match for the ensuing Easter vacation, near London. This challenge was accepted, and the papers of that old time give glowing accounts of this first race.

We are told of the faultless splendor of the June day ; the intense excitement among the students and their friends ; the grave and reverend seniors who turned out to view this novel performance.

The race took place in the late afternoon. Cambridge having given the challenge, there was a general impression that she was sure to win. Oxford expected defeat, and all the betting was against her ; but she determined to do her best.

It is not in the English nature to give up beaten in advance, and, after all, Oxford won.

The row was on the Thames, from Hambledon Lock to Henley Bridge, a distance of two and a quarter miles. I suppose wilder shouts were never heard than those which rose in Henley Valley when Oxford was declared the winner. There is a tradition that Oxford is lucky as well as plucky, and yet, after all, in the thirty-four races following the first, Oxford led by only one.

There was an interval of seven years between the

first race and the second, but in the second contest, in 1836, Cambridge was the winner. So she was in 1839, 1840, and 1841. The first race over the present course, from Putney to Mortlake, a distance of four miles, took place in 1845, and Cambridge won it by thirty seconds.

It is a fine sight to see the two long, slender boats, each with its eight picked men. They are often the flower of their universities for scholarship as well as for muscular force and skill. They can make Greek verses as easily as they can feather their oars. Some of them might have served as models for the old sculptors, superb athletes that they are.

They have been for weeks in training, submitting themselves to the most irksome restraints, and undergoing patiently the most wearisome labors, since struggle and sacrifice must be always the price of success. Their "coach" has driven them to the height of their powers more remorselessly than ever slave-driver spurred on his laborers; he has drilled them from his luxurious steam-launch as they rowed; shouted at them from the back of his own easy-going nag as they took their morning run over Barnes's Common to improve their wind.

No weakling must enter on this contest. He must be strong of heart and stout of limb who would bear the killing strain of that terrible four miles on race

day. He must be sure not alone of his energy, but of his "staying power"; for there will be no second's let-up to take breath from the time that the cry of "Go!" makes sixteen oars drop as one oar into the stream till the welcome pistol-shot is fired at Mortlake.

But if a fellow is strong enough to endure this training, to survive this long and hard strain, he will be the better for it all his life. He will have learned to deny himself, to work hard and fare simply; he will have found that labor and success are worth more than inglorious ease.

The race which I witnessed was especially exciting, since, in the long list of races, Oxford led by only one. Should she score another it would be, she felt, to put her adversary a long way behind. Cambridge was equally anxious. Should she win the record would be even, and then the light blue forever!

The race took place at an unusually early hour. It was in the gray of the morning that three American ladies of us might have been seen (as the old-fashioned novelists used to say) making our way in our own hired brougham to Mortlake; for we preferred to see the end of the race rather than the beginning.

Everybody else was astir, too. There was something keen and sweet in the taste of the morning

air. All our senses were quickened, sleepiness passed away, and expectation grew alive in us. We paid dearly for our seats on the grand stand when we reached Mortlake, but were in time to establish ourselves in the front row, and so we were well satisfied.

The time we sat there and waited seemed long, in spite of the diversions going on in the tow-path below us. Two or three Ethiopians tried to be as funny as they could, and succeeded in provoking much laughter and not a few pennies from the crowd. I was more interested, however, in watching the spectators of the race.

Many fine equipages made their appearance. One saw Young England at its best. There were such pretty girls, wearing, no doubt, the colors of their brothers or cousins; there were handsome young fellows, with rosettes of light blue or dark blue at their button-holes. One merry girl took out two pocket-handkerchiefs, one edged inch-deep with the dark blue of Oxford, and the other similarly bordered with the light blue of Cambridge.

"You see I'm ready to cheer the winner," she said, laughing.

There were various yachts and barges and steam launches on the river, each gay with one shade of blue or the other. The press steamer and the umpire's steamer were the only ones where no token of

preference was displayed. The press steamer was crowded with journalists and reporters, not a few of them University men, and as anxious, each one, for the success of his Alma Mater as any other of the University enthusiasts ; but the press claims to be impartial, so from its boat not so much as a blue feather fluttered on the wind. Of course the umpire's boat must maintain its rigid impartiality, also ; but these two were the exceptions to all the rest.

When the hour appointed for the start came, and there seemed still to be a little more delay, the excitement became intense. When the word was given to start at Putney, the boats fairly leaped, so they say, Oxford taking the lead for the first two strokes, but Cambridge instantly coming up even.

There could hardly be a finer sight than these two crews of picked men, in their graceful boats, each straining every muscle to win in this honorable contest. One moment Oxford would be a foot ahead, the next, with a sudden spurt, Cambridge would gain slightly ; but the race was so even that the excitement among the spectators was absolutely breathless. Oxford passed under Barnes's Bridge almost a length ahead, but soon afterward a man in the Oxford boat broke his rowlock, though he was still able to row.

Of course the Oxonians claim that this decided the fate of the day. To me it appeared that Cambridge was ahead when they reached their goal ; but of course I was wrong. An enthusiastic Oxonian waved his dark-blue handkerchief, and for a moment there was a wild cry that Oxford had won, which the telegraph wires flashed all over England.

I saw my pretty girl put her light-bordered handkerchief in her pocket, and wave her dark one triumphantly ; but a moment after came the judge's decision that the boats had been exactly even, and it was a "dead-heat." Out came the light-bordered handkerchief again, and the last glimpse I had of my English girl, she was showing her general kindness of heart by waving one in each hand.

It had been fine to see, as well as an occasion of intense excitement, this race. They said it was the most even ever put on record between the two universities. They do not strive for money or a "cup," these gallant young Englishmen, nor has even a desire for personal distinction much to do with it ; it is for the love of manly sport, and for the honor of their universities. It is a contest of gentlemen with gentlemen, and it will always be of interest to whoever cares for pluck, and courage, and fair play. After all, those most eager for victory were, no doubt, the mothers and sisters of the combatants. It was easy enough to see, in the fair watching

faces, where were their sympathies. For my own part, I steadfastly longed for the triumph of Cambridge, because I wanted to see the Universities start even again next year; but still the dark-blue led.

XXII.

THE CHINA MANIA.

It would be hard to tell when the rage for collecting began. Most likely as soon as there was anything to collect ; and that must have been soon after the Deluge.

Perhaps no rage of this sort ever did or ever will rival the great tulip mania in Holland, when a hundredth share in some unplanted tulip-bulb would often represent a greater fortune than a fleet of merchant-ships. Inconceivable as this statement seems, it is actually true ; and the flowers were by no means valued for their beauty, but only in proportion to their eccentricity or monstrosity.

The passion for blue-and-white china has of late years, at least in England, bid fair to be a worthy successor to the Dutch craze for bulbs. It has never, indeed, become a great national frenzy, but then Great Britain is a larger realm than Holland.

People do not, to be sure, content themselves with owning some hundredth share in a saucer which they never have seen and never will see ; but there

are those who seem to regard the collection of not particularly beautiful cups and plates, from which they never eat or drink, as the complete end and aim of human existence.

Indeed, to me there seems no beauty in blue-and-white china that one should desire it, especially when it is old and cracked.

I was dining, last week, at the house of a distinguished woman of letters. "And now I have something lovely to show you," she said cheerfully, when dinner was over.

I thought of books and pictures. Had she, by chance, some wonderful edition of Chaucer or Milton? or, better yet, one of those pictures by Rossetti which are hard to discover, since he never exhibits, but which when found are among the memorable delights of a lifetime? Her tone promised much, and I waited anxiously.

She crossed the room, and returning placed in my hands a straight, ugly-shaped pitcher, which had been blue and white once, but now was blue and yellow. It was cracked all over, and a little nick was chipped out of the edge. "There!" she cried triumphantly, "that is real old Chelsea, and I got it for only fifty-six guineas," — \$294.

Honesty got the better of politeness, and I said, — "I suppose it 's a great bargain, but I would rather have fifty-six guineas in almost anything else."

My friend had a kind heart, so she pitied and forgave me ; but there was a little touch of scorn for my ignorance in her very pardon.

You can tell the house of a china collector as soon as you enter the front door. The taste for blue-and-white china goes with the taste for a certain sort of furniture,—for chairs that are especially uncomfortable, and cabinets that are particularly inconvenient. In such houses there are shelves for china, and brackets for china, and slabs for china, but no free tables where you can lay down your book, or rest your elbow. Cheerful wall-paper would be a sin ; and the windows are stained so that no ray of sunlight can intrude.

When you enter such a house, you seem to step out of the gay, bright world, where Nature turns even the showers to rainbows, and to go into a dim, mysterious place, where you ought to speak in low tones, and where a bright smile or a bright ribbon would seem out of taste.

In this house sits the collector—if she be a lady—in the midst of her treasures, herself dressed to match. She looks, with serene contentment, at walls where, instead of pictures, hang innumerable plates and dishes, the treasures to harmonize with which she had not only dressed herself, but arranged everything else in the room. In one house, now in my mind's eye, everything in the way of furniture was

made intentionally to serve as a background for the reign of dead white and feeble blue. The walls were papered and painted for it ; and even the new piano was relined so as to produce a harmony, not of music, but of color.

To people of other tastes the effect is indescribably odd when willow-patterned plates take the place of pictures, and the owner regulates her daily life for their sake. Like all true collectors, she becomes a slave to her mania. She passes her mornings in going about, feather-duster in hand, to save the wondering housemaid from the possible misadventure of breaking some cracked saucer which looks worth about five cents, but would perhaps bring five hundred dollars, just for the sake of its cracks. For china is the one thing which is worth the more the worse its condition, short of absolute breakage. It is even rumored that such ware is often cracked on purpose.

To return to our collector : after her morning of dusting, her afternoon is passed in hunting for more specimens, cunningly hidden away by knowing dealers in dark corners of their shops that the buyer may enjoy the triumph of feeling herself also a discoverer. And what with admiring her own treasures, and gently sniffing at those of her neighbors, surely our lady of the china has occupation enough for the longest evenings.

Of course these rare delights are expensive. There was a sale, a few months since, of a collection made by one Captain Lukis, where such prices were given as \$3,550 and \$3,250 for single jars.

Everybody knows those little blue-and-white pots, about six inches high, in which preserved ginger is sold by grocers. The jars of the Lukis sale seemed to the uninitiated no bigger or more beautiful than those preserved-ginger pots ; and yet two of them brought nearly \$7,000. A dealer bought them ; and what he will ask some unfortunate collector who may buy them in his turn is terrible to think of. Why they were worth so much no outsider could guess.

It certainly did happen that, not long ago, a collector bought an extremely valuable jar for the sole purpose of breaking it, in order that its mate, in his own possession, might thereby gain in value a hundred fold.

To descend from great things to trifles, I was told by a gentleman that once, while travelling in Wales, he saw, in the window of a village shop, a little blue mug of an old-fashioned sort. It reminded him of the breakfast-mug of his childhood, and the long-forgotten taste of milk and water. He went in and bought it for old association's sake, giving about ten cents for it. Soon after he saw its fellow — precisely its fellow — in the shop-window of a fashionable

London dealer. He went in to price it, and found that his breakfast-mug was valued in London at forty dollars.

No doubt dealers in china are of average honesty ; but there is an awful temptation to fraud and forgery when the ignorant enter the market as buyers for the sake of being in the fashion. . The study of marks and "points" has become a science, and the true collector should add to the eye of a lynx the purse of a millionaire.

Mr. Gladstone, the ex-prime-minister, was severely bitten by the china mania, and finally got so much money invested in this unprofitable property that his necessities compelled him to sell his hoard.

One hardly knows why the blue and white variety of china obtained its present supremacy. The kind is called Nankin, but the color is only an accident of its period. Porcelain was invented at Singing, in China, about one hundred and eighty-five years before Christ.

The colors varied under various dynasties, blue, green, and white prevailing in turn. The oldest date inscribed on china is A. D. 1363, and since then the date has always been shown by "marks" of various kinds, which connoisseurs understand.

The principal varieties of Chinese ware known in Europe are the pure white ; the blue and white, or Nankin ; the Soumali blue ; the Celadon green ; the

marbled or shot ; the citron, or imperial ware ; the ruby blue (which seems a contradiction in terms), and the brown.

“ Crackle porcelain,” so called from its being made to look crackled all over, and the delicate egg-shell ware, invented in 1573, are also well known to connoisseurs.

Among English ware, the old Chelsea is particularly valuable. The manufactory was established about 1690, and closed 1765. As it existed only some seventy years, the work of its brief period is in great request. Blue and white manufactured there was an imitation of the Chinese, and was called Gambroon ; but there was also a royal-looking claret peculiar to Chelsea.

Porcelain was first regularly imported to Europe by the Portuguese in 1518, though it had appeared in England in 1504. Even the passion for collecting it is not of recent date ; but the *furore* which leads persons to pay such prices as I have mentioned belongs only to the present time.

Already there are symptoms that this fashion is becoming too common to last much longer ; and there is a rumor that it will be succeeded by a rage for old silver, which will probably involve ten times more of extravagance and fraud.

People are getting somewhat bitten with china in America, but I presume they are not yet likely to

pay \$300 for a turquoise blue vase, or \$650 for pieces of green crackle, or \$1,000 for a flat blue-and-white jar, though these are but common prices in England. Common sense seems to have very little part in these transactions.

XXIII.

AT A FRENCH WATERING-PLACE.

NOTHING can be more different than a French watering-place from an English one, except the two nations.

I passed the last of August and the whole of September at Etretat, a charming little place on the coast of Normandy. It is one of the best patronized bathing resorts in France, and those who know them all have told me that it is one of the pleasantest. August is the height of the season, and when I reached there, the 26th of August, I supposed there would already be plenty of vacancies. I was met by my English friends in a despairing body. It was Saturday night.

“ You will have to go over the hairdresser’s for Sunday ! ” they cried in the midst of their welcoming chorus. “ You can come to Hotel Blanquet with us on Monday, but nobody leaves till then.”

So over the hairdresser’s I went. Everybody is over *something* in the Etretat season. I repaired there quite cheerfully after I had been comforted by a good *table d’hôte* dinner at Hotel Blanquet.

It was not an uncomfortable place, though the stairway was so narrow that my big trunk had to be brought up on a ladder outside, and put into the room by the window. But the bed was clean and very comfortable, as most French beds are. There was every convenience, besides the one luxury of a stately arm-chair, and in front of it a rug of the fur of some handsome animal, with his pretty head and bright, beadlike eyes at one end of it.

Unless you kept your own reckoning, you would never know it was Sunday at any French watering-place, except that it is a little more crowded than usual by the people who come for the Sunday only. We went to church, my quiet English friends and I. There are two churches in Etretat, both Catholic.

In one I never saw any service going on. We used to call it "the little gray church on the windy hill," after the one in Matthew Arnold's wonderful poem, "The Forsaken Merman." It is a little gray building, standing on the top of a cliff, so high and steep that it is a risk to climb it on a windy day, lest you should be blown down into the sea below. But of a bright morning, or a still afternoon, we used to toil up to it, now and then, and sit awhile in its dim quiet and think "long, long thoughts," or else look out from its porch over the beautiful, far-stretching sea.

It was the other church to which we went on my first Sunday,—the church which stands invitingly down in the valley, a little removed from the town, at the end of the Rue d'Eglise, or street of the church. It is a wonderfully beautiful church to be found in that quiet little town, being considered one of the most perfect specimens of pure Norman architecture.

With this church a curious legend is connected ; indeed, Etretat is the home of legend and romance. The old inhabitants will tell you that, many centuries ago, there was a pious and very beautiful young lady, named Olive, who used often to go down to the sea-coast and wander about by herself. One day a band of armed Saracens surprised her there, and were minded to carry her off. The chief of the band already had his hand stretched out to seize her, when she lifted towards heaven her beautiful eyes, and uttered a solemn vow that if she were permitted to escape she would build a church in that place as a token of gratitude for her deliverance. Instantly a thunder-storm of such fury as was never known before burst upon them. There was a terror of great darkness, through which now and again flashed vivid and terrible lightnings. The Saracens thought that swift destruction from heaven had overtaken them. In the midst of the darkness, Olive, who knew the place so well, had taken refuge

in a neighboring grotto, and when the storm passed away, the Saracen marauders had vanished with it.

Of course, the first thought of Olive was to fulfil her vow ; and, as she had great wealth of her own, she anticipated no difficulty. But all that the workmen did by day was always undone at night by the Evil One ; and, moreover, he took the trouble of himself transporting all the building materials to the spot where the church now stands. It was at last concluded that it might be just as well to let him have his own way. So the church was erected on its present site ; and it was in this temple that I listened to the music and the prayers on my first Sunday at Etretat. The congregation was composed of the town's people, chiefly peasants, for the gay birds of fashion that plume their wings at a French watering-place liked better to go walking up and down the Esplanade, trailing their gorgeous plumage, and glancing at each other out of their dark, bright eyes.

In the evening, we came again upon precisely the same set of people we had seen in the morning at church, but very differently occupied. We were taking a quiet stroll through the dim, silent street ; when, unconsciously, we drew near “the Mairie,” that is to say, the large open space in front of the mayor's house, where all sorts of open-air meetings are held. We were attracted at first by the sound

of a curious, monotonous, melancholy chant. We approached, and lo ! in the dim, flickering gaslight, the peasants were dancing in a great ring. For them Sunday, as a sacred day, was over the moment they had left church ; from that time it became their festival. Just outside the ring of dancers was a "merry-go-round," a curious sort of affair, drawn by swift horses round a circle. Men, women, and children were riding in it, and it seemed a mad, bewildering whirl of faces which flashed by us as we passed that way.

The next morning I removed to Hotel Blanquet, and began my observations on life at a French watering-place. The hotel takes you *en pension*, that is to say, as a regular boarder. For eleven francs, about two dollars and twenty cents a day, you have *café au lait* (very nice coffee, with hot milk) and bread and butter, brought to your chamber in the morning. At half-past eleven, you have your second breakfast,—eggs, fish, two courses of meat, and then dessert, consisting of cream, cheese, and fruit. Your *table d'hôte* dinner is at six o'clock.

There are no *salons* in any of the three or four hotels at Etretat, but there is what is called the *Casino*, for the privilege of frequenting which you pay ten dollars a month. This *Casino* is the substitute for hotel parlors and piazzas, such as we have in all our American watering-places. There

is a long terrace or esplanade overlooking the sea ; then, some forty feet back from this, is a large building, which contains a billiard-room, a well-supplied reading-room, a great ball-room, and a *salon* for conversation, where you see French ladies sitting with their pretty needlework, and their children playing round them. The ball-room is also used as a theatre, and in it are given amateur theatricals and amateur operatic performances.

As a rule, Frenchmen and Frenchwomen are not handsome ; but French children, with their beautiful dark eyes, are bewitching. At Etretat they were dressed rather like stage-fairies than like children. They seemed all pink or blue silk, and white lace. They were little butterflies of the summer, and they fluttered as gayly in the evening gaslight as if the sun were shining.

Indeed, it seemed to me that life in the daytime must be a rather sad affair for them. They were so excessively well dressed that they could not have any fun. I never saw one of them playing, unless they call it playing to sit and solemnly hold dolls, as fine and fashionable as themselves, — dolls of the kind that look at you with their languishing eyes out of so many shop-windows in Paris, labelled with a touching placard, which says, “*Jé dis papa et maman, je pleure, et je marche.*” I should not have blamed those solemn dolls at Etretat for weeping ;

there really seemed nothing else for them to do. Nor did the grown-up people seem to me much better amused. Except the sober matrons, who sat and embroidered or crocheted in the *salon*, I never saw any of the rest do anything but walk up and down the terrace in silk attire, unceasingly, or bathe.

Bathing is the great event of the day at a French watering-place. At Etretat it is not necessary to regard the tide; so there are regular hours,—from half-past nine to half-past eleven or twelve in the morning, and from four to six in the afternoon. And certainly such gay and such adventurous bathing I have never seen anywhere else. If a young lady bathes, her mamma and papa and her uncles and aunts and her brothers and sisters, if she has any, are very likely to go down on the shingle to watch her; and it is amusing enough to hear their outcries of admiration when she swims, or floats, or dives.

I never saw so many ladies who could swim as at Etretat. Indeed, almost every lady who bathed took her little swim. There men, women, and children all bathed together, as they do in America, but as they do not in England; and it was prettiest of all to see the children bathe.

There is one arrangement at French watering-places which certainly ought to be introduced with us. There are always in attendance trusty bathing-men, who never let any lady or child get beyond

their reach. All through the hours for bathing, these men stand up to their waists in the water, prepared to assist the timid and protect the venturesome.

On the shingle above, where is the long line of little bathing-cabins, the wives of these men are stationed, with costumes and hats and shoes to let.

Shoes are an absolute necessity at Etretat, for the beach is not sand, but shingle, composed of small stones, which would cut naked feet.

Another excellent French custom is the use of a large wrap, made usually of white stuff, resembling Turkish towelling. When any one steps out from the sea, instead of running the gauntlet of all eyes, with the wet bathing-dress clinging to the shape, some one stands on the beach ready to wrap this great, dry *peignoir* about you, and you go up to your little cabin very comfortably.

Bathing costumes are very pretty. They are made with the jaunty French taste, and trimmed usually with white. Few people looked well in the water, however; but I used to see one girl, who wore a costume of dark blue flannel, trimmed with white, and who was beautiful enough to recall the legends of Venus arising from the waves, with the sea-foam in her bright hair.

The girl wore neither hat nor cap. Her long, dark locks were shed about her shoulders, and she

had dark eyes,—great dark, beautiful, appealing eyes. Her bare arms used to gleam whitely as she swam, for she was the best swimmer of them all. I think she must have enjoyed it, for her skill was so perfect; but there was none of the glee about her I often noticed in the others. Her sweet, serious lips never broke into laughter, and she never seemed to notice the plaudits of admiring spectators.

There was a pretty fashion, among the men, of going far out to sea in the frailest little canoes imaginable, and then tipping them over, and swimming back with them to shore. I saw a group one day which I should like to have bronzed into perpetuity.

Three men went out together in a little canoe. It was a brilliant morning. The waves sparkled, and a light fresh wind blew. Out they went,—quite far, yet not so far but that we could see them perfectly in that clear air. At last they stopped. One moment they all three stood up, balancing themselves in the little skiff, and clearly defined against the deep summer sky beyond. *That* was the moment in which they would have made a group as perfect as ever sculptor of old has chiselled. Then they plunged, all together. The glittering waves closed over them an instant, then they rose to the surface, and swam back again to land.

Often very fantastic costumes were worn, as

quaint as those of the Roman Carnival. You would see a man arrayed like a huge fish, or a great green frog, or dressed in some strange, foreign garments. There was the utmost possible variety, both of attire and of performance ; so that to sit upon the shingle and watch the bathing was for every day an unfailing amusement.

The weather through August and the early part of September is something superb on the French coast ; but later on it was very treacherous, and you were perpetually being surprised by a malignant down-pour of rain out of a clear sky.

To most of the visitors, Etretat means only the hotels and the Casino ; but there are beautiful private residences there in great numbers, and quiet streets, full of pretty little places, all gay with flowers, and shadowy with the deep peace of thick-leaved summer trees.

Offenbach, the musical composer, had there a stately villa ; and many a poet and many an artist go there for their summers. But the residents and the people at the hotels seem never to cross each other's tracks. The place itself is wonderfully beautiful, with its bold, dangerous cliffs, its horseshoe-curving shore, its quiet, inland peace, and always the infinite variety of that wonderful sea, sometimes calm as a sylvan lake, sometimes sweeping in upon the shore as if some awful madness had possessed all its mighty waves.

XXIV.

IN THE STREETS OF PARIS.

THERE is no season of the year when Paris is not gay and attractive out of doors ; but in the summer it is simply enchanting. No one lives in his interior, as the French call their homes, from May to October.

It is as much as the Frenchman can do to bring himself to pass a few hours of the burning noon-tide in his house, and to sleep away a little of the short summer night there ; for the rest of the time he is, if he is a man of leisure, out of doors.

He goes to the *Salon* ; he saunters along the shady sides of streets ; he takes his mid-day breakfast at one open-air restaurant, and his late dinner at another ; and at the fashionable hours, between four and seven, he drives in the Bois de Boulogne.

Between times he sips his coffee on the boulevards, and the evening finds him in some out-of-doors concert. He is as gay, and it seems to me as thoughtless, as the golden butterflies that flit by him in the sun.

Above all things else, Paris is *clean*. We have always heard of it as the gayest, brightest, wickedest of cities ; but people have usually forgotten to tell us how clean it is. They have disregarded this wonderful cleanliness, as if it were the commonest instead of the most uncommon thing in the world.

London is dirty. It is solemn, grimy, respectable, solid, and oh, *how* dirty ! The air is heavy with soot. If you go to a party, you must carry clean gloves in your pocket, and you would be wise to wear a double veil if you wish to arrive with a clean face. But in Paris you can go forth white-robed and spotless. In pleasant weather you might dine off the sidewalk anywhere, and eat but a very small portion of your appointed peck of dirt. Indeed, people always are eating out of doors in Paris ; it is one of the characteristic features of the city.

Beside each sidewalk is a sort of gutter, where a little stream flows brightly and constantly, and carries off all impurities. The moment it stops raining a perfect army of street-sweepers seem to spring, like gnomes, from the very bowels of the earth ; and with a peculiar steady motion they draw their broad brooms to and fro across the street, sweeping the mud into the side-gutters, where the swift water runs away with it ; and thus, after a single hour of sunshine, the whole city is as clean as a well-kept floor.

It is an unending pleasure to walk these spacious streets. The art and beauty and glory of the world are all before your eyes. You see in one window wonderful pictures,—the works of the modern French artists, a school in some respects outranking all others of our time. In another window are striking groups in terra-cotta; in others such furniture as suggests the oriental splendor of the Arabian Nights.

These clever Parisians have brought from Italy her priceless cabinets, her choicest old carvings. They have stolen the dreamy divans of the Orient; they have transported across the Channel the severe propriety of the old English; and in the midst of it all, they have disposed articles purely Parisian, whose dainty grace tempts you to prefer them to the superb reminiscences of Rome and Florence, or the luxury which has been borrowed from Constantinople.

As for jewels, if anywhere in the world there are jewels to surpass those you see in certain shop-windows in Paris, it must be that they are in kings' houses. Fancy exquisite tea-roses, the size of life, composed altogether of diamonds, so brilliant that they mock your adjectives with their shining satire. Fancy blue forget-me-nots, made of sapphires; and violets which look as if they would smell of Parma, but are fashioned from amethysts! Such exquisite

devices, such fascinating combinations of precious stones, I had never dreamed of until I came to Paris.

The effect they produce on you is curious. You begin by wanting every glittering gew-gaw that you see. You feel as if your happiness depended upon this brooch or that medallion. But after a few days you see another brooch, another medallion, so much more beautiful that you are sure you would not have been contented with your first choice. You transfer your affections again and again, until you finally become accustomed and contented to regard the display of ornaments, like that of furniture and pictures, as beautiful things to be looked at and enjoyed, but with which you have no personal concern. When you have thus ceased to wish for things, you begin thoroughly to delight in the streets of Paris.

Who buys all the hats and bonnets ? is a perpetually recurring conundrum. You would think all the women in the world might come and clothe themselves in these shops without exhausting the supply. One hardly knows who sets the fashions, now that the beautiful empress is no longer either beautiful or an empress. Truth compels me to say that the glaring contrasts of color, and the conspicuous fashions imported by some of our large dealers, are reserved for the American market. The street-dress of the true Parisian is much simpler than the prom-

enaded costumes of New York or even of Boston. You see many dark woollen suits of navy blue, or of that dusky green which just escapes black ; but it is the rarest thing to see a silk or velvet costume of anything but black. Black is the regulation color for the most elegant street attire, even for young girls. Indeed, children are more often dressed in it than in anything else.

Custom, as imperious as law, demands that all women and girls below a certain rank should wear white caps, and not bonnets. You are troubled at first, lest they should get cold ; but you soon grow used to seeing them march along tranquilly, on the bitterest of days.

It is one of the specialties of the Paris streets, by the way, the number of women you see out, arrayed in these white caps with fluted ruffles.

You often see a woman wearing a heavy fur cloak, with only one of these cambric caps upon her head. It means simply that she is rich enough to buy fur, yet not of the rank accustomed to wear bonnets. The cap looks cold enough (it used to make my teeth chatter to see it, of a keen day) ; but, after all, very likely it is more real protection than the bits of velvet which we adorn with our flowers and feathers, and then sport triumphantly on the backs of our heads.

The men in Paris, of a rank corresponding to these

white-capped women, all wear blue blouses. The expression “a blue blouse” means a man of the lower orders. Most of these men seem contented, and with no troublesome ambition to rise in the world ; but I have seen some faces among them I should have feared to meet in the dark,—men out whose brooding, dusky eyes looked the surging, lawless, mutinous spirit of the old French Revolution. They are far above the English lower orders in intelligence. Let a picture of unusual merit be put on exhibition ; and among the crowds who stop to look at it you will always see plenty of blue blouses. Nor do they give a careless glance, and pass on, but gaze long and earnestly, as if they fully understood the good points of the work.

On Sundays you meet crowds of blue blouses and white caps in the Louvre,—that wonderful gallery of supreme art ; and I have noticed that you meet them more often than anywhere else in the *salon carrée*, where are the noblest pictures of Titian and Raphael and Murillo, and where the Mona Lisa mocks at Time with her immortal loveliness, and that strange secret on her lips and in her eyes, which no man has guessed since Leonardo da Vinci painted her. I sometimes think I would choose that picture among all the pictures of Leonardo,—even as he, I think, would have chosen that woman among all the women in the world. With other pictures

and other women you get acquainted, and weary of them ; but this one beguiles you always with the unguessed riddle of her smile, and you go back again, time after time, and year after year, forever baffled and forever enchain'd. To go once a week from childhood to the *salon carrée*, and to pause, when you go below, in the hall of sculpture, and feel your heart throb within you at the divine beauty of the conquering Venus of Milo, this were no mean artistic education ; and it is open to every blue blouse in Paris.

I had always heard of the French passion for looking-glasses, but I was not prepared to find them built into the outer walls of the shops. You come upon them constantly, as you pass along any of the fashionable streets.

Why the shop-keepers are so good as to provide them, I do not know, — but there they are ; and it is very amusing to see the aged dandies, and pretty women, and even the comfortable citizens, middle-aged and portly, stop and prink before them in passing, with a sweet and touching unconsciousness that any one is looking on. I 'm even afraid I straighten my own bonnet before them sometimes.

There are almost as many *cafés*, or restaurants, in Paris as there are looking-glasses. In these *cafés* the attention is perfect, and the cooking is a dream of delight. Outside they almost all have little round

tables and chairs, where you can take your coffee or ice, and enjoy the gay panorama of the passing crowd.

In summer these outside tables are full, and even in cold weather they are seldom deserted.

There is one great danger in these clean and charming streets of Paris, — that of being run over by a *voiture*, that is to say, a hack, or by an omnibus.

I read that last year over a hundred people were maimed by being run over in the streets of Paris, and over thirty killed outright.

The most brutal-looking set here are the hack-drivers. I have never seen a single drunkard in the streets of the French capital ; but these surly, red-faced drivers look as if they could drink forever and never become drunk, but only sullen.

They drive you well enough when you are in their little traps, but the moment you are out of them they seem possessed by a malignant longing to drive over you.

Nor is this strange, since, in a way, the government of Paris seems to offer a premium for such achievements. This government, which does really seem to me in most respects one of the most admirable in the world, has passed the curious law that, if you are run over in the street, you shall pay damages for obstructing the way. The existence

of this law seems incredible ; but it is absolutely in force.

If you are run over, and have your leg broken or your arm cut off, you have not only no redress, but you must actually pay for not having been quick enough to get out of danger. I am possessed by a wild curiosity to know whether, if you are killed outright, your heirs and assigns have to pay for that. Meantime, when the stones are slippery or the dusk is falling, I cross with fear and trembling the spacious streets of Paris.

XXV.

AN INSIDE VIEW OF SHOPS IN PARIS.

I HAVE often wondered that there could be any creature who found pleasure in shopping ; and I wonder still, even though I have passed a winter in Paris, where shop-keeping is a fine art, and every possible device is adopted to surround the fact of spending money with irresistible fascinations.

Certainly, you suffer from no inconveniences in Parisian shopping. You find no scant civility, no insufficient attention, no unwillingness to show all the goods on the never-to-be-exhausted shelves.

The trouble is, amid so many bewilderments, to retain your own senses, to know in the least what you want, and to refrain from getting what you don't want.

You go into a shop of any pretensions to buy a mantle, for instance. Instantly appears the English-speaking young lady. *She* takes the tone of a confidential friend, as if it were wholly in your interest she was acting, with a lofty disregard of that of her employers.

She summons from the ranks a young person whose figure appears to her to resemble yours, that you may sit at ease yourself on a velvet sofa and be spared the fatigues of trying on.

Then a third magnificent young woman joins the group, tall, sumptuously attired, and thoroughly French. *She* represents the interests of the proprietors, and takes care that the mad generosity of the English-speaking young lady shall not quite throw away on you the finest goods in the establishment.

Thus in Paris it invariably takes three accomplished and bewitching young persons to sell a single garment, to say nothing of the fitter, who is almost sure, before the solemn occasion is over, to be summoned from some high court above to preside over some trifling but necessary alteration.

To begin with, a beautiful mantle is put upon the silent young woman who serves as lay-figure. She turns slowly round and round, and the English-speaking young lady watches your face keenly, meanwhile. If you chance to look pleased she exclaims,—

“Ah, but you *see* how this is beautiful! Madame will perhaps have the bounty to try it on herself.”

Madame consents. Mirrors are arranged that she may see herself on every side. Then a sort of exaltation, a certain rapture of admiration, grows into

the face of the English-speaking young lady. She puts her hands together in a gentle little ecstasy.

“Ah, but this *is* charming. It is quite another thing on madame’s own figure. It is *ravissante*. Ah, but madame has the air of so well dressed herein !”

But you do not quite agree with her. You see that it is too long or too short; that it does not precisely suit your shape; that it is too thick for the coming season. You make your objection, and it is translated to mademoiselle, who comes to the rescue. She of the English tongue sighs with disappointment.

“Ah, perhaps you are right. Mademoiselle agrees with you, yet to me this garment has seemed so beautiful. Mademoiselle will to you show the flower of the season.”

So the “flower of the season” is brought, and very pretty it is; but it is too narrow in the back. Then it is succeeded by “flower” after “flower,” none of which quite suit you.

At last she of the English tongue, her sweet patience still unruffled and unexhausted, returns to “*the flower of the season*.”

“I am now sure that madame prefers this, which is absolutely as much the style of madame as if madame herself had commanded it.”

Yes, madame does like that best, but madame

cannot make her back two inches narrower, even for the sake of "the flower of the season."

"Pardon ; but I had wished to say that in one day we shall have made madame one altogether like this model. We have the same of silk. If we have not the same of lace we will this remove, and madame shall be quite entirely content."

Then madame asks the price, which she has been too bewildered to do before. Five hundred francs ! But madame had intended to give not more than three hundred. The English-speaking young lady sympathizes with you. She wants to give you "the flower" for three hundred out of pure goodness of heart, because it is so becoming to you ; but that, she knows, is impossible. She speaks much French in a pleading tone to mademoiselle.

At last she tells you, triumphantly, that you shall have it for four hundred and fifty francs. You are, somehow, so bewildered that you think, not of the one hundred and fifty francs more than you meant to pay, but of this magnificent-sounding reduction.

Fifty francs is only ten dollars, but it sounds much more than that.

Inspired by your triumph over the shop, as represented in the person of mademoiselle, and encouraged by the tender sympathy of her of the English tongue, you conclude your bargain, have your measure taken, and go away. Then, only, you

begin to remember, with a certain sad surprise, that you have been cajoled into paying thirty dollars more than the utmost limit which you had assigned for yourself.

This is a fair specimen of Parisian shopping. I should greatly respect the woman who could tell me that she had spent a winter in Paris without more than once falling a victim to its beguilements, but I have never yet met her.

The most noted shop in Paris is the Bon Marché ; and it is also, perhaps, the most satisfactory for general shopping. You buy there almost everything, — beautiful ready-made costumes ; underclothes of every variety ; captivating morning dresses ; the most exquisite silks and velvets ; the most ravishing laces ; gloves of every shade and quality ; opera cloaks ; India shawls ; in short, everything that a woman can possibly wear. And not these alone, but the most sumptuous Turkish rugs are displayed for your floor ; footstools for your feet ; eider-down coverings for your bed ; exquisitely wrought sheets and pillow-cases ; all sorts of lovely and curious things from Japan ; every conceivable daintiness for your toilet-table ; an infinite variety, in short, which I could never begin to enumerate.

This Bon Marché has some curious and admirable features. I know no shop where such attention is paid to the comfort and well-being of those who are employed.

A good hot dinner is provided for them in the middle of the day, to which they go in detachments ; and so many clerks of both sexes are employed, that you never feel, through any lack of attention, the absence of those who are dining.

There is a picture-gallery, and also a reading-room, both of which are free to all the clerks, out of business hours. The pictures in the gallery, to be sure, are not masterpieces ; but on the other hand, you find there large-sized and admirable photographs of the best works of the old masters, and not of these only, but of the noblest and most celebrated works of such great masters of modern art as Gérôme and Meissonier, and Isabey and Jules Breton, whose landscapes are among the memorable delights of art, once seen, never to be forgotten.

Just beyond the picture-gallery is the little Salon of Hospitality,— the *buffet* where a free lunch awaits all the customers of the Bon Marché.

You have only to present yourself to be served with delicious cakes, accompanied by a glass of the light wine of the country, or of those pleasant syrups which most French ladies prefer to wine.

No inquiry is made into the nature or extent of your purchases. You may have bought nothing at all to-day ; all the same you are considered a patron since you are there, and quite entitled to the pretty, simple hospitalities of the place.

In the Bon Marché you are never urged to buy : you are courteously and carefully attended to, that is all. The shops where the Three Graces surround you and beguile you, till you are confused out of all knowledge of your own mind, are those of the milliners and cloak-makers, and the dealers in general "confections."

Be sure that "confections" have nothing to do with confectionery. "Confections" is the French designation for all sorts of ready-made prettinesses,—for evening dresses, street-costumes, stylish little jackets, lace over-dresses,—all, in short, that it has entered into the heart of a French dressmaker to conceive, or an American woman to desire.

The names of the saints figure largely over the doors of shops. At the little "St. Thomas" you find a similar collection of temptations as at the Bon Marché. St. Denis, St. Germain, St. Honoré, St. Martin, and a dozen other canonized worthies, have shared among themselves the honor of naming not only shops, but some of the most important streets and quarters of Paris.

It is quite certain that whoso loves to shop will find Paris a paradise. Nowhere else in the world can be found so much taste and beauty in the selection and arrangement of goods ; and certainly nowhere else can one find salesmen and saleswomen so respectful, so unobtrusive, so patient, and so good-tempered.

They will cheat you, no doubt ; but then they do it with such a fascinating grace, and they put you in such a good humor with yourself, that you are willing to pay a few extra francs for so much courtesy. And, after all, you would have to pay much more for the same wares in America, and you could not buy the compliments and courtesy at any price.

XXVI.

WALKS IN PARIS.

ONE excursion which every stranger in Paris is reasonably sure to make is to Père la Chaise.

For the most part, French burial-places are not grand or solemn. The "City of the Dead" is an old, worn-out phrase, but I have never seen any cemetery which really suggested it to me until I went to Père la Chaise, the largest and most noted cemetery in Paris, and perhaps in the world. It certainly does give you the feeling of a city, this great burial-place. It is thoroughly artificial and thoroughly Parisian. There is no sense of profound repose, nothing of the sweet country stillness one is wont to look for in a cemetery. The tombs and monuments are crowded,—the place is over-full. It is at the northeastern extremity of Paris, and commands a fine view.

You become aware of your approach to it by the shops which cluster thickly about,—dismal shops, devoted some of them to the sale of tombstones, and others to that of funeral decorations. Anything

more frightful than the French notion of decorating a grave it would be impossible to imagine. The idea seems to be to have something that will last; so they make hideous wreaths out of black and white horsehair. These wreaths are so numerous that you wonder any horse in Paris has mane or tail left.

Often they put over the graves little glass cases, like show-cases, under which, for better preservation, they hang perhaps half a dozen of these hideous wreaths. I should think the thought of sleeping under such ornaments must lend a new horror to death in France.

The wreaths of yellow amaranth are stiff and ugly enough, but they are beautiful beside the horsehair adornments, or those other frightful things made of coarse-looking black and white beads. French taste, which in the affairs of the living is so unfailing, forsakes them at the entrance of the cemetery.

There is one day, however, on which all beloved graves are covered with fresh flowers, though the odious things made of beads or horsehair are by no means removed, even then. The 2d of November, is the Feast of All Souls, and on that day all loving French folk make pilgrimages to the graves of their dead. The rich carry the most sumptuous flowers; even the poorest have found means to purchase some humble nosegay.

The churchyards on that day are populous with

the living. It is a strange sort of day, this among the graves, very different from the sad solemnity of our own Decoration Day. The mourners weep much, certainly, but also they chat pleasantly among themselves. I think they go home at night feeling that they have made a visit to their relations, and the only drawback had been that these silent hosts did not join in the conversation.

Père la Chaise is a cemetery of immense size, covering an area of one hundred and seven acres, yet it is already in many parts very crowded. The most interesting monument in the cemetery is, perhaps, the tomb of Abélard and Héloïse, those sad-fated lovers who were buried here in the twelfth century, and yet whose melancholy story touches the world still after so many hundred years.

Noble families are buried here, and so are heroes whose fighting days are over. Artists and men of letters repose very quietly, their heart-burnings and envies and jealousies long since ended.

There are more than eighteen hundred monuments, small and great, in this populous cemetery. Some of them are very costly and imposing, others quite simple; but no grave gives you the feeling, which seems to belong to death elsewhere, of solemn stillness and limitless calm. Yet in France there is a great reverence for death. The simplest funeral procession that moves along the street receives

as much honor as could be shown to a crowned head. Every man's hat is taken off the moment it appears, and no one stirs until it has gone by. They are a people, these French, of swift impulses. Joy and sadness meet in their natures like cloud and sunshine on an April day.

Leave Père la Chaise and go down to the Garden of the Tuileries, and see how full they are of the joy and brightness of living. I know not where to find walks so fascinating as a ramble through the Garden of the Tuileries, across the Place de la Concorde, and on into the Champs Elysées.

I have taken this walk as a soft spring day was drawing to its close. The sky was all rose and gold, and the distances were softly purple in the evening glow. There was a charm in the scene, half pensive and altogether tender, which I can never put into words.

But it is much gayer in the afternoon. All the little out-door theatres are in full blast then, and there are several of them in the Garden of the Tuileries, and several more in the Champs Elysées. These theatres are for the children, and the performers are not people, but marionettes, or puppets.

The play is usually the French version of Punch and Judy, of which children never seem to get weary. Punch beats his wife as usual, and drives off the

policeman who comes to arrest him, and finally Satan gets Punch, as such a Punch well deserves:

There used to be in some of these theatres a live performer,—a cat; and this cat Punch used to beat, and the poor thing took it very patiently. But the cat is suppressed now, and only Punch and Judy, as young and as entertaining as ever, hold the boards.

There is the merry-go-round, too, with its funny little wooden ponies, and its queer little chariots, and the great, strong Norman horses drawing the whole thing. How it carries me back to a summer night at Etretat, and a crowd of peasants dancing a slow, fantastic dance in the pale and fitful moonlight, and pausing now and then to take a turn in just such a merry-go-round as this!

I think I prefer the Garden of the Tuileries and the Champs Elysées to the Bois de Boulogne; and yet when I am in the Bois, I think I prefer that to almost anything else.

The Bois de Boulogne is the Hyde Park of Paris, the fashionable drive and promenade for this gay city. But between it and Hyde Park there are some striking differences. As a whole, you see in Hyde Park much nobler horses and more stately equipages. The English horses are, I think, the finest in the world. You see them at their best, and only at their best, in Hyde Park, since no plebeian cab is admitted there.

The arrangements of the Bois de Boulogne are much more liberal. The humblest public conveyance can enter it freely. You can hire your little trap on the street, for fifty cents an hour, and disport yourself in the park with the best.

The scene there in the fashionable hours for driving is extremely lively. The carriages are very numerous, and you will often see six of them driving abreast.

Up to 1852 the Bois used to be a sort of forest, with broad walks and rides leading through it. In 1852 Napoleon III. presented the Bois de Boulogne to the city of Paris, and, in concert with the city government, dug out lakes and made waterfalls, laid out new roads, and converted it into the most fascinating pleasure-ground in Europe.

It is very large, occupying nearly twenty-five hundred acres, of which more than seventy acres are water. Most of the trees were cut down in the evil days of 1870 and 1871. But still it is one of the finest parks in the world, and between three and four in the afternoon you may see there the fashion and beauty of Paris.

There are two artificial lakes in the Bois, one two thirds, and the other a quarter of a mile in length. In the largest of these lakes are two islands, and on one of them is a café, in the form of a Swiss chalet. You are taken from the main-land

to this picturesque café for four cents, and you find there all sorts of dainty temptations in the way of eating and drinking.

The drive around the lake, called the Tour du Lac, is the place where the carriages chiefly congregate. The Bois contains a deer-park, a wind-mill, two lakes, and the Cascade de Longchamps, which to us, who live in the same country with Niagara, seems a pretty trifle, but to the French themselves eclipses all the other attractions of the Bois. It is simply an artificial waterfall,—an immense piece of rock-work, over which a considerable body of water falls some forty feet.

At one end of the Bois is an enclosed portion called the Jardin d'Acclimatation,—a garden the purpose of which is to acclimatize in France birds, animals, and plants from every quarter of the globe. The varieties of dogs alone seem endless; and as for birds, I had never dreamed of anything so various and so beautiful as this collection.

There is a monkey-house, and there are carriages for children to ride in, some drawn by ostriches, and others by zebras, and I know not how many strange animals. Also there are amiable elephants, on whose backs you may ride.

Concerts are given several times a week in the Bois, but I think the pleasantest open-air concert is that of the Orangerie, in the Gardens of the Tuilleries, near the Place de la Concorde.

A space of ground is enclosed so large that you can take a long walk in it, but the music-stand and the chairs for the audience are at the end near the Place de la Concorde. I went early with a friend, and we sat down for a quiet half-hour before the music began, to watch the lighting of the many-colored lamps, and to look off toward the lingering radiance of the sunset sky, and see near at hand the wonderful Column of Luxor, taking us back to Egypt and mystery, and a civilization ages and ages older than our own ; or, farther on, the Arch of Triumph, commenced by Napoleon I. and finished by Louis Philippe in 1838.

"Is there any city in the whole world so beautiful as Paris ?" I asked, as we looked out towards the Elysian Fields.

"I think not," answered my friend, who had travelled much. "Certainly the only city in America which could ever become so is Washington. Washington is laid out on so grand a scale of distances that it might in time have something of the very kind of beauty which Paris has ; but all the other American cities are too closely built for any such spacious and grand effects as we see here."

While we looked and chatted two men came forward, and began to light the long row of gay-colored lanterns which hang in front of the Orangerie, and swing in the soft summer wind. Here and

there, too, began to shine forth the superb electric lights.

These electric lights are a feature of Paris. They are intensely white and clear, and they make the gaslights which surround them seem very yellow and vulgar.

Each separate electric light always looks to me as if some strange young moon had been let down from the distant sky, and was mocking every common thing around with its too dazzling purity. When the lights were kindled the music began, and we took our place among the large audience seated in front of the music-stand.

The music was very fine, quite equal to that of Thomas's orchestra. When the first part was over there was a long intermission, during which people strolled about and looked into the dim depths of shade in the Tuileries Gardens just beyond, or saw the lights glancing on the tranquil Seine, or ate ices at the innumerable little tables.

It was a veritable scene out of fairy-land. A soft wind waved the tree-boughs and shook the colored lights. The music sounded like music in a dream; and all about was the glamour, the wide and brooding peace, of the mystic summer night.

Another summer-night pleasure is a trip on the Seine in one of the little steamers that are con-

stantly plying up and down it. I am not sure that for myself I would not prefer such an evening to any other. You seem to have taken leave of all the heat and glare of the day. However hot it is elsewhere, it is always cool on the river after sunset. You have all the pleasure with none of the fatigue of motion. You watch the lights everywhere, for Paris is the most brilliantly lighted city in the world; and you look down into the contrasting depth and shadow of the river with a sort of feeling that you are gliding between two worlds.

Every few moments you pass under one of the twenty-seven great bridges of Paris. Of these twenty-seven bridges, twenty are of solid stone, among the most massive and the grandest bridges in the world. Many of them are named in commemoration of famous French victories, and some, as the Pont de l'Alma, for instance, are adorned with statues of soldiers who took part in the battle from which the bridge takes its name.

All these bridges are brilliantly illuminated, and form a sort of span of light across the river; but, dropping under them, you pass for a moment into a nether world of darkness and shadow.

To those who care chiefly to be amused, the boulevards, with their out-of-door refreshments, afford inexhaustible entertainment. The broad sidewalks are crowded with little round tables, so

surrounded by guests that it seems as if all Paris must be sitting at them. You eat your ice or drink your after-dinner coffee, and a ceaseless, constantly varied panorama moves by you. You seem to meet all the tribes of the earth in Paris.

XXVII.

THE PASSION PLAY IN 1880.

PERHAPS to no single spot in Europe did so many people make pilgrimage during the summer of 1880 as to Ober Ammergau, the little village in the Bavarian Tyrol where the Passion Play is performed. We left Munich in the morning, went by rail to Murnau, and thence took a carriage to Ober Ammergau, which we reached just as the August sun was setting.

The Bavarian Tyrol is a region so beautiful that its picturesqueness would well repay a longer journey than one makes to reach it. Ober Ammergau itself is situated in the heart of the mountains, which watch over it forever. The first sun-rays gild those glittering heights before they peer down into the valley. The twilight lingers longest upon their shining summits; and at night they brood solemn and stately, like watching Titans, over the village below.

We went to sleep in their gigantic shadow; but the summer night seemed short, for at three o'clock

began the discharge of cannon, and at five o'clock all the bells clamored a salutation to the dawn, summoning faithful souls to early mass.

Bavaria is an intensely Catholic country. Way-side shrines are plentiful as blackberries. Many of the houses are frescoed on the outside with pictures of the saints ; and there is scarcely a house of any pretension on which you do not see, in particular, one favorite Madonna.

Our room at the "White Lamb" was hung with crucifixes and with pictures of the saints. It was a very quaint chamber, with four tidy little beds in it, for the four ladies of our party. The sole covering that was provided us was the little square feather-bed which is in use throughout Germany ; and anything more delusive and uncomfortable could scarcely be imagined.

We rose early, and already in the streets below we could see crowds of people on their way to the theatre where the Passion Play was to be performed, though its doors would not be opened until seven o'clock, and the performance would not commence until eight o'clock. At a little past six we, too, became possessed with the general impulse, and made our way into the street and marched onward with the rest. We waited wearily in the dense throng before the theatre, for we had not been able to secure reserved seats.

When at length the doors were opened, the rush began. It was horrible. We were swept off our feet and borne onward as by a great wave.

Only a very small portion of the theatre is under cover. Our seats were entirely unsheltered. This was not unpleasant during the hour in which we sat and waited for the play to begin. The mountain air was full of the freshness of the morning ; the sky was blue and clear ; and the sun was not yet high enough to be uncomfortable.

Lifting our eyes, we could see above the walls the always beautiful hills. We sat there, and thought over all that we had read about the Passion Play, especially concerning its origin, or rather the origin of its decennial repetition, which dates from 1633.

It was while Germany was suffering under the ravages of the Thirty Years' War that a severe attack of plague broke out in the villages of the Bavarian Tyrol. All the larger towns were speedily devastated by it ; but for a long time the secluded little village of Ober Ammergau was exempt from its visitations.

In order to secure their safety from infection, the village authorities forbade any one to pass from the happy valley into the dangerous world beyond. Doubtless they meant also to prohibit the entrance of any person from outside ; but one night a peas-

ant, who had been at work in the infected district for some time, moved by a desperate longing to see his wife and family, made his way to them secretly. Three days afterward he lay plague-stricken and dead, and forty of the villagers speedily followed him. In their agony of terror the good people of Ober Ammergau resolved to try to propitiate heaven by a pious vow, and bound themselves and their descendants, if the plague might then and there be stayed, to perform then, and every ten years afterward, with all due reverence and solemnity, a play, the purpose of which should be to impress upon the beholders the life, death, and mediation of the Redeemer.

While waiting in the crowd we had bought the programme, entitled, "The Great Atonement on Mount Golgotha, or the Sufferings and Death of Jesus." It must be confessed that it is difficult to dissociate from such a programme and such a performance the thought of irreverence.

To regard it justly, it is necessary to go back in spirit to the Middle Ages,—ages of outward ceremony and pictorial pomp. Religious plays were at that time one of the most common methods, in Catholic countries, of enforcing religious truths. It is certain that they were performed, in those early days, in a most solemn and pious spirit.

The little text-book of the play published at pres-

ent by the community of Ober Ammergau proclaims that their object is "to represent the story of Christ's Passion, not by a mere statement of facts, but in connection with the types and figures and prophecies of the Old Testament, and thus to cast an additional and strong light upon the sacred narrative." It is to be feared, however, that the Passion Play has greatly degenerated.

Up to 1850 scarcely any strangers had ever beheld it. Anna Mary Howitt, who witnessed it at that time and has written eloquently about it, was deeply impressed with the solemnity and sincerity of the performers; but since then it has become the fashion.

The theatre, which will seat nearly six thousand people, is always filled; and it seldom fails to be necessary to give a second performance on Monday. These representations are constantly going on from the middle of May to the end of September; and it seems to me that at present the Passion Play is performed not so much in the spirit of the religious fulfilment of a vow as by way of a means of drawing strangers and money and prosperity to Ober Ammergau. It is a little village of wood-carvers; and they would probably gain more by one year's representation of the Passion Play than by the intervening nine years of quiet labor.

I, at any rate, quite failed to receive the impres-

sion of single-hearted earnestness and solemnity which I had been led by all the writers on the subject to expect. But I have kept you too long from the play itself.

At eight o'clock the curtain is drawn from before the immense stage ; the orchestra, consisting of some two dozen performers in Tyrolese costume, plays an overture, and the chorus comes slowly marching in. It consists of eight men, including the "choragus," or chorus leader, and fourteen women, who figure as guardian spirits.

The portion of the stage where they stand is uncovered, and, as they sing, the fresh mountain wind comes in, with the songs of birds, and the breath of mountain flowers, and you can raise your eyes and behold the encircling amphitheatre of mountains, which seem to have been made by nature to represent the hills standing round about Jerusalem.

The chorus are clad in robes of vivid and various colors, men and women being dressed nearly alike as to the form of their garments ; they are arranged according to height, the taller occupying the centre of the stage. Truth to tell, their long descriptive chant is monotonous and tedious ; and one awaits with impatience the rising of the curtain before the inner stage.

It goes up at last ; and behold, we see Adam and Eve, as they are depicted in the paintings of the old

masters, fig-leaves and all, and an angel in a white robe, with a tawdry tinsel sword, is driving them away. I confess that I was disappointed.

The majesty, the grace, the solemnity of which all the books had spoken, where were they ?

A second tableau, of the angels bringing good tidings, succeeded ; and then began the real play, consisting of seventeen acts, commencing with Christ's entry into Jerusalem, and terminating with the Ascension.

The curtain rises on the crowded streets of Jerusalem ; and through the throng comes Joseph Mair (the Christ of 1880, as he was of 1870), clothed in purple, and riding upon an ass. His face, with the hair parted in the middle, has perhaps a certain suggestion of some of the old pictures of Christ ; but his expression seemed to me self-conscious and sentimental. The ass was small, and the man's legs were long, and he looked rather uncomfortable ; but he presently dismounted.

Peter was there, in a blue robe and yellow mantle, with bare feet ; John, in red attire ; and Judas, in orange and yellow, — all the costumes being copied from pictures by the old masters.

Each of the seventeen acts of the play is complete in itself ; and each is preceded by one or more tableaux selected from Old Testament incidents, as prefiguring the special scene in the life of Christ which is to follow it.

Thus, for example, the supply of manna in the desert typifies the Last Supper ; the sacrifice of Isaac, the Crucifixion ; and, oddly enough, Jonah cast forth on dry land by the whale is chosen to symbolize the Resurrection.

With the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, the morning performance, which has lasted over four hours, is brought to a close ; and the spectators are allowed an hour for much-needed rest and refreshment.

They wander round the close-set little village through which the sparkling Ammer flows, look at the quaint frescos on the houses, pick up their cold viands where they can, and at a little past one they go back again into the crowded theatre.

The long line of the chorus appears, and chant their monotonous explanation ; and at last the curtain rises on the Old Testament tableau, where Zedekiah smites the prophet Micaiah on the cheek, which prefigures the betrayal and captivity of Christ.

The one grand scene of the whole play is the Crucifixion. In that there was no disappointment. Its life-likeness, its terrible solemnity, have not been exaggerated. It seemed, on the day on which we witnessed the play, as if Nature herself were in sympathy with the awful theme.

The sun, which all the morning had been scorching us to a blister, had gone behind the black clouds

which had spread themselves over all the heavens ; thunder clamored and reverberated among the hills, and then the rain began to fall ! and under the inky sky, amid the rain and the thunder, the Christ was uplifted upon the Cross.

It was a scene never to be forgotten. Every detail of the gospel narrative was brought before us. There was the living, suffering figure, the torn and bleeding hands and feet, and the bruised and patient head, with its crown of thorns. Every feature of the awful record was carried out to the letter, even to the piercing of the side with a spear. If the rest of the Passion Play had seemed tawdry and ineffectual, in this one scene it reached a terrible height of solemn grandeur.

The play should have ended there. Everything that followed was an anticlimax ; and the tableau of Jonah and the Whale was overcomingly ludicrous.

Still it was interesting to have seen this quaint mediæval survival. Certainly the comparisons with the highest dramatic art which some writers have made in favor of the Passion Play seem to me simply absurd, except in the one grand scene of the Crucifixion ; and even there it was the power of picture-making rather than of acting by which the supreme impression was produced.

But viewed as the achievement of a little village

full of Bavarian peasants, the Passion Play must always remain a marvel. Their command of stage resources, rude as these often are ; their wonderful power to copy the pictures of the old masters in their tableaux ; their ingenuity of contrivance, as displayed, for instance, in the manner in which the Christ is invisibly supported upon the Cross, are worthy of great praise. And I can fancy that in 1850, when Anna Mary Howitt was among the first strangers who ever witnessed the Passion Play, it must have been far more impressive than at present. It had not then been vulgarized by being turned into a show. It really was a religious performance, taking vital hold on the hearts and the imaginations of the simple peasant people.

Now that it is turned into an attraction for travellers, and a means of filling the coffers of the villagers, there is much reason to believe that its days are numbered.

XXVIII.

FROM INNSBRUCK TO MUNICH.

WE drove by private carriage from Ober Ammergau to Innsbruck, taking two days for the leisurely journey. Our way for the whole distance lay through the Tyrol,—the Bavarian Tyrol first and then the Austrian. With each change of scene the charm of the landscape grew on us. We half envied the *sennerinnen*, or herd-girls, who spend the whole summer among these lonely, lovely hills, watching their herds. Cows are the chief wealth of the Bavarian highlanders. A rich man is spoken of among them as “a man of many cows.” Usually he possesses several plots of pasture-land, some in the valley and others on the mountain; and in the month of June, when the lower pastures begin to dry up and wither, the *sennerinn* drives her herds up the mountain-side, to pass there three months in a solitude unbroken save by the Sunday visits of her sweetheart. They say no *sennerinn* ever lacks this consolation of her loneliness. How she must watch for him, after a whole week of only the hills and the sky and the cows!

How she hails the sight of his Tyrolean hat, with its cock's feather and its sprig of edelweiss ! The day is all too short, for with the nightfall he must descend again into the valley.

Through the week the *sennerinn*'s chief comfort is the bell-cow, for every herd has its bell-cow or queen. When one of the herd is lost this queen cow accompanies her mistress like a faithful dog to find the wanderer, and manifests her full share of anxiety. When the herds are brought down again, in September, to the valleys, the bell-cow, hung with a thick garland of alpine flowers, leads the procession. The *sennerinn* either walks beside her or rides upon her back. This day of return is the great day of the herd-girl's life. The mountain air has brightened her eyes and freshened her cheeks. The villagers surround her with eager welcomes, and the sweetheart, who has made glad the Sundays of her summer, is most likely quite ready to marry her, and turn her winter into holiday.

Innsbruck, or Innspruck, is the capital of the Austrian Tyrol. We reached it after dark, for our journey had been delayed by an accident which came near costing us our lives. The brake of our carriage gave way while we were driving down a steep mountain, and our horses absolutely plunged along the descent. There were two or three awful moments during which we looked death in the face.

Then our carriage hurled itself upon one in front of us, and down we all came in one mighty crash together. The horses were writhing upon the ground, the carriages were broken, but we were safe, though shaken, and walked on thankfully to the next village.

Thus it was that we entered Innsbruck in the night and the rain, and it was only the next morning that its extreme beauty of situation surprised us. Some of the mountains surrounding it are ten thousand feet above the sea-level. Their tops were covered with freshly fallen snow, and they were almost too dazzlingly bright in the morning sunshine for mortal eyes to gaze upon them steadily. Their unutterable loveliness struck me dumb. I was confronted afresh by the wonderful glory of this long-enduring world, wherein we brief human creatures flutter like butterflies for our transient day, and are gone.

The excursions around Innsbruck mock one's powers of description with their beauty. One day we went to the Achensee, the loveliest of the Bavarian lakes, and rowed over its clear waters in the shadow of the hills. Another morning we drove to Schloss Amrass, the castle built by the Grand Duke Ferdinand for Philipine Welser, his beautiful but lowly-born bride. Returning thence our driver asked us if we would go up to the *tummel-platz*, waving his hand toward an inviting path that

seemed to lead into the very heart of the woods. We climbed on and on, the way being marked by "Stations of the Cross," each one a little shrine containing some incident in the life of Christ. At last we came upon the tombs which compose the *tummel-platz*. The burial place was devoted wholly to soldiers who had fallen, more than two centuries ago, in the "Thirty Years' War." The tall forest trees waved between these long-ago dead and the far blue sky, and among the tree-boughs a light wind went to and fro, seeming almost to hold its breath lest any sound should break the grave's long stillness. How fare they now, these dead men, who died while fighting hard, and whose peaceful dust reposes beneath these thousands of quaint little wooden crosses? Their lives passed and their end came in noise and tumult: and now they lie where is no sound save the wind's low sighing; the soft hurry of some tiny mountain stream; some shy bird's sweet, sudden note; or the call, made faint by distance, of the church-bells in the valley far below, summoning the faithful to their prayers.

To go from Innsbruck to Munich is to pass from the uttermost glory of Nature to the uttermost glory of Art. The stately new part of the city is almost wholly the work of King Ludwig I. of Bavaria, who reigned from 1825 to 1848. The situation of Munich is very beautiful. Next to Madrid, it is

the most elevated city in Europe,— some six hundred feet above the level of the sea. It is divided in two parts by the river Isar, that same Isar to which Campbell refers in “Hohenlinden” :—

“ And dark as Winter was the flow
Of Isar rolling rapidly.”

The palaces of Munich — and palaces are nearly as common there as shops are elsewhere — are most of them copies of celebrated buildings in other cities. The King’s Palace is modelled on the Pitti Palace in Florence ; the Hall of the Marshals is in imitation of the Florentine *Loggia dei Lanzi* ; the Church of St. Boniface reproduces an ancient Italian Basilica ; while the Glyptothek, or gallery of sculpture, is a specimen of purely Greek architecture. In the Glyptothek I passed an enchanting morning. Sculpture gives me an altogether different emotion from painting, — less passionate, perhaps, but more profound. I stood in the hall of the old Egyptian statues until they seemed to possess me like a Fate. Their extreme simplicity, their perfect sincerity, the sense they give, in their immemorial grandeur, of man’s own brevity contrasted with the long endurance of the work of his hands, are almost overpowering. Art struggles in them, an unborn idea seeking the light. I should not say struggles, — they are too passionless for such a word : the

spirit in them gropes and aspires. It was born afterwards with the Greeks. How pure some of the early Greek statues are ! One hardly wonders at the faith which held them for likenesses of the gods.

The picture-galleries of Munich are very rich, also, especially the Gallery of Old Masters. There are in it nine large *salons*, each devoted to a different school of art. Rubens has one quite to himself, and a very rich collection of his works it contains. Among them are some charming portraits of his two wives. There is a picture of Rubens himself, sitting with his first wife, Isabel Brandt, in an arbor of honeysuckle. A fine, gallant, handsome young fellow was old Peter Paul in those days, and his Isabel, a sweet, frank, fresh-looking young woman, seemed very much alive to his merits. His second wife, Helen Froment, or Forman (the name is written in both ways), was more beautiful than the first. Of Helen there are numerous portraits ; but quite the most charming of them all is the one thus described in the catalogue :—

“Portrait by Peter Paul Rubens, Helen Froment, sitting under an open portico, holding on her knees her youngest son, *covered only* with a cap garnished with black feathers.”

This droll description of the infant’s attire is literally true. The baby boy is as beautiful, however, as one of Correggio’s immortal children. His

lovely young mother is attired in velvet stiff with gold embroidery, and she looks handsome and happy enough to justify Peter Paul for making her the central figure of all his pictures, as he always did from the time he married her.

Among other things in Munich one goes to see the Bavaria, the largest statue of a single figure in the world. A staircase winds up its vast interior, and in its colossal head six persons can seat themselves comfortably, and look out of the great port-holes of its eyes.

The cemetery at Munich resembles an Italian *Campo Santo*. In connection with it is the Morgue, where dead bodies are laid in state, previously to their interment. Strangely enough, of the eight bodies robed for the grave I chanced to see there, seven were of young babies, the eighth being a very old woman. The babies were daintily clad in lace and muslin, and surrounded with flowers. Nearly all of them had their eyes wide open, with a look of mystery and wonder in them, as if they gazed upon some other world than ours. The very smallest of them all was a strange, wizened little creature, with wrinkles like those of extreme old age. It had lived three months, perhaps, and it had all the sorrows of threescore years and ten written upon its tiny, pathetic face.

There could scarcely be a more imposing array of

stately buildings than one sees in driving the length of the Maximilian Strasse, from the Hof Theatre to the Maximilian Bridge at the other end. You pass the Government Buildings, the National Museum, the Post Office frescoed with pictures on a background of the most vivid vermillion. Crossing the noble Maximilian Bridge we approach the Maximilianeum, which grandly fronts and commands the long view of the stately street. This superb edifice has the advantage of a most commanding situation. It was built by King Maximilian II., and by him endowed as an institute for the gratuitous reception and maintenance during a course of study of such students as have taken the prizes of the Gymnasium for their proficiency in art or science.

One of the most marked features in the history of Bavaria has been the devotion of her kings to the fine arts. As I have said, modern Munich was born chiefly from the brain of Ludwig I.; his son, Maximilian II., followed in the same path; and the present king, Ludwig II., is passionately devoted to music, and in particular to the music of Herr Richard Wagner. He leads a life of singular seclusion, and his eccentricities are said to have greatly alienated from him the upper classes of his subjects; but the common people cling to him with a passionate devotion and faith. He is not much more than thirty years of age, handsome, accomplished, and highly

intelligent. But he hides these brilliant gifts from the world ; holds no court ; entertains no one, save now and then some artist or musician, and scarcely ever visits his capital. He passes his time in retired hunting-lodges, or shooting-boxes, of which he has a great many, though he never hunts or shoots. He seldom stays more than a week in any of these places, but when he removes it is always in the dead of night. The midnight echoes are startled by the tramp of horses and the rapid rolling of carriage-wheels, and the people turn sleepily in their beds and say, "The king is moving." He devotes his time to solitary study, and admits no one save artists to his friendship. He invited Herr Wagner to pay him a visit, but it is rumored in Munich that the king proved too much for the maestro, who went away saying that he could play all night *or* all day ; but to do *both* was beyond the power of any one except the king.

It would be ungrateful to leave Munich without a word about the nice little open carriages, in which one has driven to see all the sights of the town. The charioteers of these equipages are a gorgeous band. They wear bright blue coats, turned over with brilliant scarlet collars, and buttoned with silver buttons. Silver bands encircle their tall, shiny hats, and often from these bands depends a silver tassel. The price for being driven by all this

magnificence is extremely moderate. In fact cab-fare in Munich is cheaper than in any place I have ever known. For a single course, though it be from one end of the city to the other, you pay but twelve cents; and you get a carriage a whole hour for a quarter of a dollar. For art students and art lovers Munich is the earthly Paradise.

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